

DE WITT'S TWENTY FIVE CENT NOVELS

ARRAH-NA-POGUE



N.O.R.-CO. N.Y.

OR THE WICKLOW WEDDING

ROBERT M. DE WITT, Publisher, 13 Frankfort St., New York

ARRAH-NA-POGUE;

(ARRAH-OF-THE-KISS.)

OR,

THE WICKLOW WEDDING.

FOUNDED ON THE SAME INCIDENTS AS THE

CELEBRATED DRAMA, BY DION BOURCICAULT,

NOW BEING PLAYED WITH IMMENSE SUCCESS.

NEW-YORK:
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13 FRANKFORT STREET.

ARRAH-NA-POGUE;

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CHAPTER I.

THE LONELY LAKE.

In the heart of Wicklow is a lonely lake known as Glendalough. Placidly ride the moonbeams over its silver depths as they bathe in a flood of argent splendour the ruins of St. Kevin's Abbey, which stand out in melancholy grandeur: the link that binds the present to the past, the relic of a bygone age.

Dear is the County Wicklow to every patriotic heart; sweet are its sacrifices, and sacred the blood that its sons have shed in a holy cause.

A little better than half a century ago, Ireland was convulsed to her very centre.

Castlereagh, who, perhaps, in a fit of remorse for his political crimes and blunders, cut his throat, had roused the dormant spirit of all the sons of Erin.

Wicklow partook of the general excitement, and its patriotic sons rallied around the green flag.

But what chance had they against solid phalanxes of regular troops?

Beamish M'Coul, a landowner and a true son of the soil, endeavored to organize an insurrection against the English.

The county was in the hands of the enemy, and, while admitting its folly, he was compelled to abandon his attempt.

With the deepest regret he ordered his tenantry to lay down their arms, and submit as best they could to the new rule.

The consequences of his rash enterprize did not end here, however.

The M'Coul was outlawed and compelled to find a refuge where he best could. Sometimes he slept in trees, sometimes in barns, and for short periods of time, some one of his faithful tenantry gave him shelter.

His property was confiscated, and a Government agent collected the rents. All this was very trying to him; but the spark of patriotism was not extinguished.

The M'Coul bided his time and waited his opportunity.

One night, when his fortunes were at their lowest ebb, he received information that a low, pettifogging lawyer, who was a spy and an informer, would pass by the lonely lake of Glendalough with a large sum of money which he had collected on the M'Coul estate, in his pocket.

solved to intercept the scoundrel and ease him of his ill-gotten plunder, for the collection of which there was little doubt that the Government paid him well.

The collector's name was Michael Feeny, and he was universally disliked all through the County Wicklow.

The M'Coul left his hiding-place and went to the shore of the lonely lake, accompanied by one or two followers, who were on the look-out to inform him when danger, in the form of the patrol, was nigh.

The entire county was in the possession of the English, and all the roads were strongly guarded, so that it was morally impossible for any one to go half-a-dozen miles without a pass, and those who were unprovided with the magical bit of paper were looked upon as traitors and treated accordingly.

The M'Coul paced the floor with impatient footsteps.

"How hard is my fate," he said, soliloquizing: "For no fault of my own am I hunted down like a wild beast. The hated English thirst for my blood, and the scaffold looms in the distance. Is it a crime for a man to love his country and to wish to rid it of a detested thralldom which is altogether foreign to the genius of the people?"

As he spoke, his scouts entered from a defile, and told him that Michael Feeny was advancing from Glendalough.

The M'Coul pulled up his coat-collar, and slouched his hat over his eyes, so that he might not be recognised by the rent collector, and put himself in a good position for attack. He was dressed in a shabby manner, but his long, white coat, concealed his form, which it thoroughly enveloped.

Michael Feeny wore a swallow-tail coat, and tight-fitting black continuations; he was thin and spare, his stature was not large—his dimensions were contemptible, and he would have done excellently well for a scarecrow.

He came along in high glee, talking and jabbering to himself, perhaps to keep his courage up, for the passes about Glendalough had a bad name, and Michael Feeny knew that he had an evil reputation; he had brought more than one man to the foot of the gallows, and there were those near and dear to the dead men who cried out for vengeance, and openly said, "that nothing but the blood of the informer would satisfy them."

Michael had good cause for fear.

Beamish M'Coul stood in the shadow cast by the rock; his tall figure was exaggerated by the misty light. He looked like an avenging spirit. The moon cast her palid beams to earth, as if unconscious of the deed of violence that was soon to be committed under her assisting radiance.

When Michael Feeny had advanced to within a few paces of the M'Coul, the latter stepped forward, and said, in a sepulchral voice—

"Halt!"

Michael Feeny brought himself to an abrupt stop. His limbs trembled, and his knees knocked together, while his coward heart pulsed with a violence that threatened to annihilate him.

He did not recognise the M'Coul, but thought he was the prey of some lawless depredator, who was about to take advantage of the disturbed state of the country, to commit a highway robbery, which he hoped would not be aggravated by personal violence.

"Oh! by the five crasses, and what would you do wid me?" he cried, in an agony of terror.

"You have just been collecting the M'Coul's rents," replied Beamish, calmly.

"Shure and——"

"Don't interrupt me! You have a large sum of money in your pocket, which I will thank you instantly to hand over to me!"

"Is it money, misthre robber, dear?"

"Yes, money; give it me at once."

"At wanst?"

"Without any delay!"

Michael Feeny's complexion was never anything to boast of but when he saw that the robber was determined to ease him of the money he carried, he turned the color of a duck egg; and his face became a bad mongrel blue.

"Divil a halfpenny," began Michael Feeny.

The M'Coul cut him short by producing a pistol, which he held at his head, saying—

"Come, no palavering!"

"If I have any money it's only a trifle."

"You lying thief, I wonder the lie doesn't choke you; out with the canvas bag. Quick! or I pull the trigger, and you will be lying at the bottom of the lake with a stone to your heels."

"Praise your honour, it's here;" said Michael Feeny, producing the bag in which the money was securely tied up.

The M'Coul took the bag, examined it, and put it in his pocket.

While he was thus engaged, Feeny endeavoured to get away, saying to himself—

"I'm off in three skips of a Scotch Grey. He would not have robbed me if he had not been such a big bosthoon of a giant; but men of that kidney always overreach themselves. He had no pass, and he will be caught by the patrol before long. Thrath, and I'll give evidence against him, which will be fully ayquil to a conviction."

When the M'Coul saw that the informer was stealing away, he cried, "Michael Feeny!"

"Saints defend us! he knows my name," exclaimed Feeny, in astonishment.

"Come back."

"What is it, captin dear?"

"I want you."

"Banath lalth!" (My blessing with you!) said Feeny.

"Come back, I say, or——"

"Don't shoot, ahagur."

"Blood alive! come back."

"I'm coming—I'm coming," cried Michael Feeny, in a doleful voice.

"You have a pass?"

"It is a pass your saying?"

"Yes."

"Becoose it isn't right you are at all, at all."

"No prevarication."

"By the holy saikermments!"

Again the pistol was levelled, and so persuasive was its silent argument that Michael Feeny pulled out his pass and handed it to the M'Coul with a terrible sigh of regret, which nearly shook his slender figure to pieces.

"Och! murder—murder," he said, in a plaintive voice: "I shall be killed, and stiff, and stark, and cowl before this time to-morrow."

"That would not surprise me in the slightest degree," said the M'Coul, mischievously.

"And why not?"

"Because to my certain knowledge, there's more than one blunderbuss waiting for you behind a wall."

"Oh! your honour, don't be spaking that way."

"It's true."

"Thrus, is it? I'm a corpse."

"The blunderbusses are on full cock."

"Oh! my blood's water, and my inside's all fiddle-strings."

"Away with you!"

"Captain, darlint."

"Well?"

"May I ask for the loan of that bit of a pistol you have in your hand?"

"Not if I know it. You may take what's inside it, if you're not afraid of having an attack of your old complaint, the falling sickness."

"Oh, oh!" cried Michael Feeny, "it's kilt intirely I am."

"Be off!" said the M'Coul, imperious.

The diminutive rent-collector sneaked away with the gliding motion peculiar to the snake tribe, muttering as he went—

"Ugh! the bare-faced idolother. Ugh! the lost haythen. Here's a purty state of things. Worra, worra!"

With this wail on his lips he disappeared beneath the sheltering branches of a grove of trees.

When Michael Feeny had made himself scarce, the members of the "finest pisantry in the world" came trooping in from their hiding-places, and congratulated the M'Coul on the splendid achievement which he had just brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Generosity was one of Beamish M'Coul's leading traits, and he opened the bag of which he had, in a manner, robbed Feeny, though the money was in reality his own, and took from it the gold, leaving the notes at the bottom.

Throwing the gold towards his followers, he cried in a loud, hearty voice, "Look out, boys; here's something for you to feed the pigs and keep the pot a boiling until the praties come in."

The men caught the money, and equally divided it amongst them, amidst such exclamations as "More power, I say!" "Long life to you, sir!" "Be my sowl kind father to you!" "May yer never ait worse mait than mutton, whish! more power!"

Wishing to be alone, Beamish M'Coul addressed a few kindly words to his followers, and bid them be off to their points of vantage, where they might keep a good look out, and warn him of the approach of the patrol, not that he cared for the patrol now that he had Michael Feeny's pass in his possession, but he wished to be informed of their proximity.

He did not seem desirous of leaving the spot, though the avowed object which had brought him there had been accomplished.

Had Beamish M'Coul any further reason for staying by the lonely shore of Glendalough?

Perhaps he had.

Ha! he starts and turns anxiously towards a defile running through the valley at the base of the cliff upon whose summit stands the ruins of St. Kevin's Abbey. The pattering of tiny fairy feet is heard—a woman is advancing.

Again the pistol was levelled, and so petrified was the M'Coul with a terrible sight of regret which nearly shook his slender figure to pieces.

CHAPTER II.

FANNY POWER, OF CABIN-TEELY.

MISS FANNY POWER, of Cabin-teely, was the daughter of an Irish gentleman. In the prosperous days of the M'Coul she had been thrown much in contact with him, the result of which was a mutual attachment.

Beamish loved her passionately, with all the raging fire of his enthusiastic nature. Love with him was, to a certain extent, an abstraction. To love was to adore, to adore to worship, to worship to idolize. There was no limit to his devotion. Chivalric knights of old did not love their mistresses with more force or vehemence than did the high-spirited M'Coul.

Fanny Power reciprocated his affection, but her love was not so strong and

so enduring as his own. To love and to beloved by Beamish M'Coul, gentleman, was a very different thing to being the betrothed of an outlaw, upon whose head a price was set, and for whose blood the hounds of a tyrannical government were thirsting.

Poor Fanny found her love sorely tried when she had to steal out of her father's house secretly, and make a long and weary pilgrimage to some lonely glen, or lake, or dell, to which her lover had crept stealthily.

The M'Coul had appointed Glendalough as a rendezvous with Fanny Power.

He saw that his life was unsafe in Ireland, and that if he succeeded in evading the officers of the law and the military, he would not be able to resume his old position in the county until he obtained a pardon from government, and that, he thought, he should be much more likely to obtain if he was in a foreign land.

He had consulted with his friends, and they all advised him to escape to the coast of France.

He had resolved upon adopting their advice, and he had sent a messenger to Fanny Power, requesting her to meet him at the foot of St. Kevin's Abbey, by the shore of the lonely lake of Glendalough.

She had kept the tryst.

He wished to take leave of her.

"By that lake whose gloomy shore
Skylark never warbles o'er ;
Where the cliff hangs high and steep,
Gay St. Kevin stole to sleep."

Radiant in all the gushing loveliness of twenty blooming summers, Fanny Power ran forward to meet her lover.

Her hair had caught in the protruding branch of a tree, which had disarranged its fastenings, and all its golden wealth fell in a shower down her back. Her blue eyes were eloquent of love, and her little hand trembled as it was closely clasped in the strong and manly grasp of Beamish M'Coul.

"Oh ! Beamish, dear—dear Beamish," was all she could murmur as she fell upon his neck, and allowed her head to rest upon his breast.

"My own, my darling cushla machree," (pulse of my heart).

"Oh ! Beamish," she continued, rousing herself, "and is it all true?"

"Is all what true, my love?"

"All in that cruel, cruel letter you sent me. Are you really obliged to fly from Ireland ? Must I lose thee ?"

"For a time : only for a time, dearest."

"It seems so dreadful. It was only this morning I took up a book in which was one of your dear, dear letters. I put it as a marker, and while I read it over again, I kissed it a thousand times, my Beamish."

"Poor child !" exclaimed the M'Coul.

Fanny Power's tears began to flow.

"Come, come, darling, be brave. In these troublesome times, when Ireland bleeds from every pore, we must all be brave and courageous. If you would be a patriot's bride, you must share his perils and bear with his misfortunes."

"Do not leave me, Beamish," she cried, raising her tearful eyes to his and looking at him with a long, earnest pleading glance. "Oh ! do not leave me, Beamish !"

"When I am gone, my friends will exert themselves and procure a pardon for me, which will enable me to return to Ireland and to thee."

"But it is so hard to part."

"Let us hope it will not be a lengthened parting."

"Who can tell ?"

"I would gladly stop here, but the cause is hopeless and I can do no good. I only expose myself to useless sufferings. You do not fully understand the hardships I have put up with. Sometimes for days together I am concealed in a barn, half smothered beneath trusses of straw; occasionally I sleep up a tree——"

"Up a tree!" said Fanny, with a slight laugh. "Oh! how funny. Fancy sleeping up a tree?"

"It is true, however ludicrous the idea may appear to you, but it is anything but pleasant or agreeable, I can assure you."

"Oh! my poor ill-used Beamish," cried Fanny Power, throwing her arms round him as if to shield him from the attacks of the enemies.

"The people are very kind to me, and I thank them from the very bottom of my heart for their kindness. I wish I could liberate them from a foreign yoke. But the day will come."

Affected to eloquence by the unhappy condition of his native land, which he proposed to leave for ever, the M'Coul raised his manly form to its full height, and turning towards the dark waters of Glendalough, exclaimed in a tragic voice—

"Oh! my country! how my heart bleeds for thee. Trodden as thou art beneath the iron heel of the oppressive invader; trampled into the dust by the relentless conqueror. Oh! Ireland, Ireland, weep for your slain sons, weep for your depopulated counties. Sigh over your starving sons, and pray for those who languish in melancholy exile. Oh! God in heaven, pour out thy blessing upon long-suffering Ireland."

He paused.

Overcome by his emotion, he covered his face with his hands and seemed oblivious of Miss Power's presence. In her breast the spark of patriotic fire did not burn so ardently as it did in that of the M'Coul, and she felt jealous of Ireland for absorbing so much of her lover's pathetic affection.

"Beamish!" she said, impatiently.

"Pardon me, my own, I had for the time forgotten thee," he replied, confusedly.

"Oh! Beamish, if you can forget me when I am by your side, what will you do when you are miles—miles away?"

"My love!"

"I am not your love. You love your country better than me," she replied petulantly. "I am sure no one can like Ireland better than I do; but I can't see what you want to make such a fuss about the Union for. It does us no harm. If you had not taken an active part in politics, we should not now have been obliged to separate. I declare it is enough to break a girl's heart, and make her go into a convent."

"Have you forgotten that the course of true love never did run smooth?" said the M'Coul, with a smile.

"Proverbs will not mend the matter. Why did you ever meddle with politics?"

"My blood rose up in rebellion, and I could not remain passive."

"And what good have you done by your rising?"

"None."

"You admit it?"

"I do, with unqualified sorrow; but although we have been miserably unsuccessful, I have the consolation of not only knowing but feeling that I have done my duty as my ancestors have done theirs before them, and that is not a negative advantage."

"If I let you go, will you promise to love me, Beamish?"

"As I love my life."

"No foreign lady shall steal you from me?"

"May Heaven's thunder!"

"Do not asseverate; the word of the M'Coul is always sufficient."

"Absence will, if possible, Fanny darling, make my heart grow fonder," said Beamish. "No lady, however beautiful, however rich, or great, shall tempt me for one moment from my allegiance. I am yours, and yours alone, and will be yours for ever."

"Bless you, Beamish, for that assurance. Now I shall be able to tolerate your absence with greater bravery. But Heaven help me! It is so hard to part with you."

"Our meeting will be all the more delightful."

"Oh, those politics," said Fanny, stamping her foot angrily on the floor. "I wish there were no such things as politics."

All at once a clear strain rose upon the air.

Both the M'Coul and Fanny listened attentively:

"Slut or slaughter, holy water,

Sprinkle the Catholics every one,

Cut them asunder and make them lie under,

The Protestant boys will carry their own.

Lero, lero, lillibullero, lillibullero bullenala.

"King James he pitched his tents between

The lines for to retire;

But King William threw his bomb-shells in,

And set them all on fire.

Lero, lero, lillibullero, lillibullero bullenala.

"July the first, in Old Bridge town,

There was a greivous battle,

When many a man lay on the ground

By the cannon that did rattle.

Lero, lero, lillibullero, lillibullero bullenala."

As this song ceased, the harsh cry of a screech-owl was heard.

"What is it, dear Beamish?" inquired Fanny Power.

"A signal, my dear; the patrol are at hand and their leader; may a bad place receive him in insulting us with his Orange songs!"

"The patrol?"

"Yes; do not be alarmed, I am prepared for them."

"Thank Heaven for that; but use no violence. Will you rather not fly? They will not take you from me, Beamish."

"No, my own; calm your fears," responded the M'Coul.

The sergeant in command of the patrol had been indulging in a famous Protestant air, which for more than two centuries had been intolerable to the Catholic patriots, and productive of many a fight. How many a head has been broken owing to the provocation of "Lero, lero, lillibullero," it would be difficult to say.

The cry of the screech-owl was a signal from one of the M'Coul's followers to indicate that the patrol were at hand. They had come suddenly through one of the hill passes and had taken the scouts by surprise, so that they had not time to come down from their places of observation and give their master warning of his danger.

The patrol consisted of a sergeant and twelve men, who walked in single file, with their muskets loaded and their matches burning, so that they might be prepared for any emergency.

When the patrol came within a few yards of the M'Coul, the sergeant cried "Halt!" and the men grounded arms: advancing, the sergeant, who was a bluff, honest Englishman, exclaimed, "Who are you?"

"A traveler, as you may perceive."

"Have you a pass?"

"I have."

"Produce it."

"With pleasure."

The M'Coul felt in his pocket and produced Michael Feeny's pass, which he handed to the sergeant, who held it up to a lantern he carried, the light of which fell upon, and enabled him to read it.

"Right," he said, handing back the pass.

"Sergeant!" cried the M'Coul.

"Sir, to you."

"It's dangerous they tell me, to go about these hills without a guard?"

"May be so."

"Would you mind seeing us on the way to Cabin-teely?"

"Sorra a bit, as they say down here," replied the sergeant.

"And Sergeant?"

"Sir."

The M'Coul pointed to Miss Power, and, with a significant glance, said—

"Not a word of this little affair. If—eh—you understand?"

"Ay, you need not fear."

"I may rely upon your discretion?"

"To the death," responded the sergeant.

Lifting up his voice, he once more sang—

"There's nought but care on every hand,
In every hour that passes, oh;
What signifies the life of man,
An' 'twere not for the lasses, oh!"

"You are merry to-night," said Beamish M'Coul.

"My spirits are low, and a little noise keeps them up," replied the sergeant, with a gruff laugh.

The M'Coul took Fanny by the hand, and, preceded by the sergeant, walked to the patrol, who closed up behind them.

"By y'r left, march," cried the sergeant.

They did so, and their forms were soon lost in the distance.

CHAPTER II.

SHAUN-THE-POST.

THE M'Coul was generally beloved by his tenantry; he had always behaved to them with the greatest liberality. If they were unfortunate and behindhand with their rent, he never pressed them for payment.

A girl who lived in a poor cabin with her aged mother had lately given her master shelter. He was hard pressed by the English soldiers, and he had a claim upon the kindness of Arrah Meelish, for he had given her the cabin in which she lived, and had in other ways assisted her in the day of distress.

It was but a poor shelter that Arrah Meelish was enabled to give the M'Coul. The cabin was liable to a rigorous search at any moment, so that the best she could do was to let him go to the roof and sleep beneath the thatch amongst the mice and the rats.

Arrah kept the fact of the M'Coul having hidden himself in her cabin a profound secret, and her mother, who was old and foolish, was not even aware of the circumstance.

Not even Shaun the letter-carrier, or Shaun the Post, as he was called, who was Arrah Meelish's intended husband, was in the secret. Shaun had long ago made up his mind to have the pretty Arrah for his wife, and she was not at all loath to fall in with his views. There was not a more honest man in the County Wicklow than Shaun the Post, and although he was simple and humble many a woman might have been proud of his love, and have carried her head higher after a kind word and a look from Shaun.

The day after the meeting between Miss Power and the M'Coul on the shore of Glendalough was appointed for Shaun and Arrah's wedding-day. All those who have loved and who have been married, without taking up a heavy cross in the object of their adoration, can imagine the happiness which took possession of Arrah's heart and filled the little cabin in which she lived.

The misadventure of Michael Feeny had not yet had time to be disseminated throughout the county; but had Arrah known it, she would only have rejoiced, for she, in conjunction with others of her class, despised the process-server.

Michael Feeny, however, did not despise Arrah Meelish; he had the audacity to love her. He actually was courageous enough to fix his affections upon her, and to think that he could make an impression upon her and induce her to love him.

In this belief he was greatly mistaken, for Arrah had no regard for a man who got his living by lying and deceit, and by preying upon and making capital out of the ills of his fellow-creatures.

On the morning appointed for the nuptial ceremony of Shaun and Arrah Meelish, Shaun the Post was up betimes and sought Arrah's cabin.

It was the happiest day in Shaun's life, and he stole in the grey dawn of the morning to the cabin door and knocked gently, hiding himself under the gable as he did so.

In a minute or so Arrah appeared, and looking out of the window exclaimed—

"It's the pig."

"It is the pig, then?" cried Shaun; "open the door softly, somebody wants ye, dear."

"Oh! it's Shaun," said Arrah, with an assumed indifference.

"Yes, me darlint, it's Shaun come to wish the top o' the morning to yer."

Shaun the Post was a strongly made, wiry little fellow, about five-and-twenty years of age. If he was not strictly handsome, he had that open, frank, comical face which generally characterizes the Irish peasant. Arrah was fair and plump, with light hair and a pleasing face, which, like charity, would have covered a multitude of sins, had she been guilty of peccadilloes, which she was not, except such as those which are venial, and implanted in frail human nature.

"Oh! get along wid yez," replied Arrah.

Shaun ran forward and tried to catch her in an embrace, and imprint a kiss upon her lips, but she was too nimble for him. She slipped from his grasp, and running to a distance, stood laughing at him.

"You have as many twists in you as an eel, Arrah," said Shaun, sheepishly.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Arrah.

"Shure and I'd like to give you a hit under the nose with my mouth," said Shaun.

Arrah Meelish still continued to laugh, and went farther away, as if she was determined to successfully resist any attempt he might make, and elude his grasp.

"Arrah Meelish! Arrah, darlint!" cried Shaun. "If I was to ax yez for a kiss ye'd say no; but ye're so lovely."

"Ha! ha!"

"And so butiful."

"Ha! ha!"

"And so like a rose and a lily, and——"
 "You've been robbin' the bee-hives, Shaun," said Arrah, interrupting him, "and got the smell of honey on your tongue."
 "Be Jabers, and it's you who have a cake o' honey on your cheeks, which I'd like to have the kissing of."

"Go along wid yez, Shaun, and take your letters; I won't spake wid yez until your letters are delivered."

Shaun's only reply to this adjuration was to make another attempt to kiss the recalcitrant beauty, but she again got away from him causing him to exclaim—

"Your very lively, Arrah; but wait till you change your name, and have two children in an ould praskeen tied to you back."

His eyes twinkled with a mischievous merriment as he said this, and Arrah pretended to be very much annoyed. Snatching up a broom, she drove him from the cabin, and he went away laughing to deliver his letters.

Scarcely had he gone before Beamish M'Coul appeared, and said—

"Ah! Arrah, up so early."

"Yes, sir," she replied, blushing.

"I forgot that it was your wedding-day. May Heaven bless you, my good girl; for you are a good girl, and one that Shaun may be proud of as his wife. I wish you all prosperity, Arrah."

"Thank you, sir. If it please Hivin, we'll have a happy widdin'."

The M'Coul put his hand in the pocket of his coat, and produced the bag of which he had robbed Michael Feeny; he had no use for the notes himself—indeed, he had not taken the money for his own purposes; he had done it out of daring insolence and audacity to the Secretary of State in Ireland, to show him that if he did confiscate his rents, he could not rely upon keeping them.

He intended to make them a present to Arrah, but he little recked of the disastrous consequences his injudicious gift would bring in its wake; had he done so, he would have scattered them to the winds.

CHAPTER IV.

MICHAEL FEENY MAKES LOVE.

ARRAH MEELISH had never expected the slightest reward from the M'Coul for the various acts of kindness which she had done him, and when she saw the notes fluttering in the wind, she did not for a moment suspect that he was about to present them to her, though such was in reality the case.

"Here, Arrah," the M'Coul exclaimed, "I am much beholden to you, accept these notes as a slight token of my regard and my gratitude."

"Is it a widdin' prisint, Misthre Beamish?"

"It is, if you will allow me to give it you. It is my own money, and I have a right to do as I like with it."

"The blissins of Hivin powre upon you, Misthre Beamish," cried Arrah, in rapturous delight.

She took the notes which the M'Coul gave her, and blessed him again and again for his kindness.

"Look upon it as your dowry."

"Shure and you gave me mother and me the cottage which shelters us from the blasts of winter and the suns of summer; there's no end to your kindness, Mr. Beamish."

"There, there, say no more; take the money, and much good may it do you, my pretty Arrah," replied the M'Coul.

"What shall I do to show my gratitude, sir? Shall I——"

"Love your husband, Arrah."

"I'll try," she replied, demurely.

"And bear with him when he takes a drop more whisky than is good for him."

"Is it a dhrap of the cratur ye mane, sir. Shaun is not givin' to it."

"Then he's the first Irishman I ever knew who practised so much abstemiousness," said the M'Coul, with a laugh.

"Shall I sing you a song, sir?"

"Not just now."

"Not the song of 'Beal Derg O'Dónnell,' nor 'Larry Dorneen's Ass,' or the 'Shamrock so Green?'"

"The last is one I could listen to for ever, but I must get some rest, Arrah. I have been up all night, and I can scarcely keep my eyes open for very weariness."

"Then it's I who'll be the last to detain you, Mr. Beamish," replied Arrah.

The M'Coul wrung her hand again, wished her a happy wedding-day and a life of double blessedness, and going into the cottage took up his position under the thatch, and, like a thoroughbred true Irish gentleman that he was, fell asleep, though his pillow was a joist, his bed a couple of boards, and his covering the rusty thatch of an old Irish cabin.

"Oh! this is kind of dear Misthre Beamish," cried Arrah, when she was alone. "Oh! what a lot of money, and won't Shaun be glad, the darlint, for he'll be able to buy pigs and praties galore."

She had scarcely finished her remarks when a footstep fell upon her ear; turning round she encountered the gaze of Mr. Michael Feeny, who was shuffling towards the cabin as well as the state of the roads would permit him.

He wore a sad and melancholy expression upon his countenance, though it lightened a little when he saw Arrah, who, not inclined to be civil, turned her back upon him and took up a couple of pails, which stood hard by, and into which she intended to milk the cow.

"Dear me! Bless my sowl!" exclaimed Michael Feeny, "what a country this is, to be shure! I wish I was dead and in my grave, I do."

"And what's the matter with you, Misthre Feeny," said Arrah, turning round and condescending to speak to him, seeing that a meeting was inevitable.

"I've been robbed," groaned Michael Feeny.

"Robbed, is it?"

"Yes, and I have my suspicions."

"Oh! that's a comfort to your faylings."

"Where has Shaun been?"

"Where do you think?"

"Where was he all night?"

"Where was your face before it was washed?"

"Spake me civil," said Michael Feeny.

"Why should I spake ye civil, Michael Feeny," cried Arrah Meelish, facing him angrily; "what are you to may? Why do you come here, you omad-houn?"

"We shall say: I have my suspicions."

"What do you mane by that?"

"Where was Shaun last night?"

"I tell yez I don't know. In bed, I suppose; where else should he be?"

"I've lost me money, for I was stopped last night and robbed; but it is not that, Arrah, that I came to see yez about."

"What then?"

"I love you, Arrah; I love you, acushla."

"Indad."

"Listen to may, me colleen. It's I who love you wid all my heart."

"That's not saying much."

"And why?"

"Bekaise you've got no heart worth-spaking of," replied Arrah, with a laugh, which rang through the surrounding atmosphere.

"Will you have me?"

"Have *you*?"

"Yes."

"Do you not know that to-day I am to be married to Shaun? You cannot plade ignorance to that."

"Shaun! may the thunders and the lightnings never stop—"

"I'll tell him," cried Arrah, "and perhaps he'll have a thrifle of spache wid ye."

"He robbed me."

"He! Shaun robbed you!" replied Arrah; "what next will you say—what should he rob you for?"

"My money," replied Feeny, laconically.

"And do you think we want your dirty money? Look here."

She produced the notes which Beamish McCoul had given her, and holding them up in the air, said, "Do you see this?—all notes, bank notes, and is it money we want?"

Michael Feeny's eyes glistened as he saw the tissue paper. He crept up to Arrah, and leaning over her shoulder, said in a tremulous tone—

"Bank notes, eh! Bank notes; let me see?"

"Oh! yes, you may see; here's a five, and a ten, and a five and a ten again, and—"

"Ah!" cried Michael Feeny, "what's that my name? Yes; my name on the back. I was right. Shaun robbed me. Oh! this is glorious!"

He spoke in a low tone, and Arrah said, "What's that ye're saying, Misthre Feeny?"

"Nothing my dear, nothing; I'm only wondering at you having so much money in your possession."

"And is it Shaun that would rob you, when we've all that money? Go along wid you and serve your processors."

Taking up her pails, after having placed the notes in her pocket, she went away singing to milk the cows, and left Feeny standing by himself before the cottage. He walked up and down in a restless manner, with his hands clasped behind his back, his head bent forward, and evidently engaged in deep thought.

"Could it have been Shaun that robbed me," he muttered; "or was it somebody else? Who is in the cottage? I thought I heard some one. The old woman cannot be stirring—I'll listen."

He walked to the door, and putting his ear to the key-hole, listened attentively for some time. Unhappily for him, Shaun the post, happened to come back when he was in the midst of that interesting occupation.

"Is it lis'nin' ye are at the kay-hole, Misthre Feeny?" cried Shaun, laying hold of him and sending him into the middle of the road with a vigorous push.

"What do you mane by this insolence?"

"I'll have none of your spying and prying here, Michael Feeny. It's me wedding day, and I don't want no crawlin' reptiles."

"You'll be sorry for this," said Michael Feeny in a rage.

"Oh! no; no one can touch me. They called you Mikel when you was born, but they christened you over again, and now we all know you're a rogue and a thief, Michael Feeny. They can't say nothing agin' me, glory be to God bekaise I never stooped to your dirty work; and if I was tried by a jury to-morrow, I'd come out with flying colours. They'll keep the gate of Hivin

close agin you, and when it comes to the last of all, you'll be bate, Michael Feeny.

"We shall say about that, we shall say," replied Feeny, in a proverbial philosophic manner.

The discussion seemed to wax warm, when Arrah Meelish returned from the cow-shed, and saw at a glance how affairs stood.

"Is it talking to you about the money, Shaun, he says he's lost?" cried Arrah, setting down her pails, full of new milk, in the road.

"It's a few words we're having."

"He says you robbed him."

"D hamnu orth a Arrah, go, dhe shin dher thu," cried Shaun, in pure Irish. ("Confound you, Arrah, what are you saying?")

Michael Feeny did not understand Irish, and he looked vacantly at the speaker.

"You may talk in your own dialect," he said; "but I have my suspicions."

"You are right to say our di'lect," replied Shaun; "for Ireland won't own you."

"He's a wretch, Shaun, and wants me to——"

"Bhe dha hush; fag a rogarah lumsa." (Hold your tongue; leave the rascal to me.)

In obedience to this command, Arrah Meelish was silent, and went into the house with her pails of milk. Small pails they were, but even the little milk she obtained was a great boon to them, and enabled them to obtain many luxuries.

The lot of an Irish peasant in those days was a hard one, and the absentees know that even now it is not much better. There are those who love Ireland, and hope for better days, but the Celt is being absorbed by the Saxon, and gloomy is the future of a brave and clever people, who have not their parallel on the face of the globe for heroic endurance, and indomitable love of their fatherland.

"Be off, Michael Feeny," cried Shaun-the-Post. "I should like to see the fore front of your back."

Feeny slunk away, muttering—"There was some one in the cabin, and it was not Shaun; ha! ha! They slight me, and insult me, but I fancy I have discovered the rebel nest, ho! ho! If it should be that Beamish M'Coul is concealed in Arrah's cabin, what a triumph for me! Whist! Michael, don't let so much as a life hear you; you're on the right road, and will, if you are true to yourself, unkennel the M'Coul; 'twas him who robbed me. I see it all; but whist! whist! the time will come, whist! we shall see."

"Veehone bradagh!" (Vagabond scoundrel), said Shaun the-Post, when he saw the back of him.

The innate honesty of an Irish peasant's character makes him instinctively detest anything that is vile and underhanded: a process-server, a man who does dirty work for a sum which he could honestly acquire, by other means, is, and always has been, an object of hatred to Paddy.

"That man," muttered Shaun, "is a bad one. May I niver taste porther agin, if I shouldn't like to see him cowlid in his grave. It's little waking I'm thinking he'd get for me, and devil a praste is there in the country who'd say a mass for his dirty sowl."

Arrah stole softly out of the cabin, and coming behind Shaun, touched him lightly on the shoulder.

"Bless your purty face, acushla," cried Shaun. "Shure its my own you'll be s on, and I'll love you bettther than the pig and the praties."

"Can you keep a secret, Shaun?" said Arrah.

"Thry me."

"Well, I will; but you must keep it bekaise I wouldn't like every one to know. Look here."

She produced the notes, much to Shaun's delight.

"Is it all yours?" he inquired.

"All of it."

"And who was the good fairy that give it you?"

"That is the secret!"

"I won't tell."

"Well, it was the M'Coul."

"Mishter Beamish?"

"Yes, but you must mind what you have promised, and not tell any one. 'This money,' he said, 'was my widdin' prisint, and much good might it do me,' he added."

"Thank the Lord," said Shaun-the-Post, whose heart swelled within him.

He could, with a little money in his possession, defy a bad potato season, and keep starvation from the door, even if his pigs died—potatoes and pigs being the two great staples of Irish industry and trade. After some conversation, the lovers separated, Shaun promising to return with his friends to claim Arrah Meelish as his bride, and to take her to the nearest magistrate, to ask permission to have a merrymaking to celebrate the event after the Priest had tied the bonds which were to make them man and wife, until death did part them.

CHAPTER IV.

THE head of a clan in Ireland is always known as "the," which distinguishing epithet places him above all others of the same name, so that Colonel Bagenal O'Grady of Ballybetagh, being the head of all O'Grady's in Wicklow, was essentially the O'Grady in the fullest sense of the expressive word. He was a fine fellow, and an Irish gentleman, which is saying a great deal.

Like all men, he had his weakness.

Now, Colonel Bagenal O'Grady's weakness was a strong affection for Miss Fanny Power of Cabinteely, who he loved with all his heart.

Until the outlawry of the chivalrous, but unfortunate M'Coul, she had despised his suit and treated him with contempt; but the O'Grady happened to be on very friendly terms with the Secretary of State at Dublin, and in this functionary's power was it to condemn the "rebels," as they were called; and hoping to obtain a pardon for Beamish M'Coul, Fanny Power encouraged the O'Grady, and led him on to purpose that her feelings for him had undergone a change, and he poor fellow, was simple-minded enough to believe that it actually was so, and that Fanny loved him.

Before she would speak to him on the subject of love she laid down a condition, and that was that the colonel should write to the Secretary of State and obtain a pardon for the M'Coul.

He consented to do so, and an answer from Dublin was expected every day.

The morning after the meeting on the lonely shore of Glendalough, Fanny Power received a message from the O'Grady, begging her to step round to Ballybetagh, and apologizing for not coming to her on the ground of urgent magisterial business, he added that he had news of an important nature to communicate, which he hoped would be pleasing to her.

Fanny at once ordered her carriage, and drove to Ballybetagh.

The O'Grady never for one moment suspected that Miss Power was interested in the M'Coul, or he would not have exerted himself to obtain his pardon.

It is a characteristic of frank, stirring, honest people, that they are not at all suspicious; they take everything as it comes, and even a child may deceive them with the exercise of a very little trouble.

He knew that he was a good-hearted fellow and a bluff soldier, and he fancied that his good qualities and his personal appearance had so worked upon Fanny that, in conjunction with his assiduous attention, she had been won over to love him.

Miss Power more than suspected that the worthy colonel had received news from Dublin, and she made her horses go as quickly as the hilly nature of the country and the bad state of the roads would permit.

On arriving at Ballybetagh she was shown into the armoury where the O'Grady was anxiously awaiting her coming.

"Good-morning, Miss Power," he exclaimed. "It is kind of you to come to me; I would never have asked you had I not been tied by the leg here. The fact is, I have just got a letter from me friend the Secretary, and he gives a pardon to that hot-headed young man the M'Coul, and much good may the clemency of the crown do him, say I."

"A pardon," cried Fanny, clasping her hands and looking up to Heaven thankfully.

"Yes—a full and free pardon: shall I read it to you?"

"If you please."

The O'Grady, full of importance and inflated with self-esteem and satisfaction, took a paper from his pocket, and slowly unfolding it, read:—

"It is his Majesty's pleasure to grant a pardon to the M'Coul, otherwise Beamish M'Coul, always provided that he has taken no part in the fresh disturbances which have lately broken out in various parts of the County Wicklow; and further, that the said Beamish M'Coul at once leaves the shores of Ireland and retires for the period of two years to France, or some foreign country. Should, however, the M'Coul be proved to have taken part in the fresh disturbances above alluded to, this pardon shall be null and void."

Fanny turned pale, and the blank expression of her face showed how much she was disappointed.

She did not for a moment suppose that he had taken part in any fresh disturbances, and she was altogether ignorant of the part he had played in the robbery of Michael Feeny, which robbery was a very serious offence, seeing that Feeny was a government agent at that time, carrying money which was the property of the government, as the M'Coul's rents had been legally confiscated to the crown.

That was not what annoyed and distressed her. The grief from which she was suffering arose from a totally different cause.

He was to be banished for two years from his country; for two long weary years she would never see him—never hear his voice, or drink in those words of love which it delighted him to utter.

This was a hard condition, and she said, petulantly,—

"I don't call that a pardon at all."

"You don't, Miss Power?"

"You may think so, but I don't. Fancy driving the poor man away from his country for two years. It is dreadful."

"It saved his neck from a halter, at any rate," replied the O'Grady; "and when he's away from Ireland his courage will cool."

"It doesn't want cooling, sir."

"Eh, you take a great interest in this young man," said the O'Grady, a little suspiciously, raising his eyes, and looking at Fanny steadfastly.

She saw the errors of which she had been guilty, and at once proceeded to rectify it, saying—

"My dear O'Grady, I take an interest in the M'Coul because—h'm—because

—yes—I mean that he is a neighbour, and is going to be hanged or shot for nothing at all, as one may say. His only fault is loving his country too well; and now I come to think of it, I agree with you that an exile of two years in a foreign land will do him a great deal of good, and be highly beneficial to him. Oh yes, highly beneficial; and I am much obliged to you for all your trouble.”

“Don’t thank me, Miss Power, for it was a pleasure to serve you; and having served you I hope I may expect my reward.”

“Your reward!” said Fanny, pretending ignorance of his meaning

“Ballybetagh’s waiting for its Mistress O’Grady.”

“O, colonel, how can you!” said Fanny; “you really must not. It is so sudden.”

“But by the powers——”

He was interrupted in his tender speech by a great uproar outside the armoury, and both he and Fanny turned eagerly round—the latter thankfully—to discover the cause of the disturbance.

CHAPTER VI.

ARRAH-NA-POGUE.

THE noise which aroused the attention and interrupted the love-making of the O’Grady was occasioned by the entrance of the wedding-party from Arrah’s cabin at Laragh.

Owing to the disturbed state of the country, a gathering together of the peasantry was not permitted without special license from a magistrate, for fear that any such gathering might be merely a cloak for a seditious and treasonable meeting.

Shaun entered first, leading Arrah Meelish by the hand. They were both covered with a rosy colour, arising from that very natural *mauvaise honte* with which the occasion of marriage often impregnates both the bride and bridegroom.

They were both dressed in their best, and looked a very well-matched pair.

They were well known to the O’Grady, and he had a great respect for them as honest and industrious people, keeping aloof from the seditious of the day, and minding their own business while working for their living.

Had the colonel known that Arrah Meelish at that moment was concealing the M’Coul, and that he had in her cabin for more than six weeks eluded the vigilance of his Britannic Majesty’s troops, he would have altered his opinion

“Shaun-the-Post and Arrah-na-Pogue!” exclaimed the colonel; “upon my word, a very nice couple.”

“Arrah-na-Pogue,” repeated Miss Power; “why that means Arrah of the kiss.”

“To be sure it does. Have you never heard the story?”

“Never. I should like to hear it extremely; my curiosity is excited,” replied Fanny.

“Arrah, my girl,” said the colonel, “just tell the lady how the peasantry came to nickname you ‘Na-Pogue.’”

Arrah blushed, stammered, and hid herself behind Shaun, who pushed her forward again, saying—

“Shure, and the O’Grady himself asks you.”

“Your honour will excuse me,” cried Arrah.

“She’s a bit nervous, your honour,” exclaimed Shaun apologetically.

“Well, do you tell the story yourself, Shaun.”

“Troth, that I will, your honour, wid the greatest of pleasure. You see, miss, it was this way,” began Shaun-the-Post; “there was a man who was Arrah’s

foster brother, and the soldiers had something agin him, and put him in the prison. The bhoys didn't want to see him choked like a dog, so they got up atwixt them a little matther of escape, but the difficulty was how to let the prisoner know of it, and they came to Arrah, and she said write it down on a bit of papher, and they did it. She put the paper in her mouth, you see, Miss, and went to the prison to see her foster brother, and in coorse they kissed one another, and while they were kissing, Arrah, the darlint, slipped the paper from her mouth into her foster brother's, and so he knew what the bhoys were doing for him, and betwane them all he got out, and that's why they call her Arrah-na-Pogue."

"That was a capital plan," said Fanny Power, "and quite an original idea. I must confess I never heard of such a Post-office."

"The Irish are famed for their ingenuity," said the O'Grady, chiming in. "But now, boys, what is it? I suppose Shaun's going to run his head into a noose, and you all of you want my permission to keep the wake up, and drink your potheen without interruption."

Shaun-the-Post replied in the affirmative.

"You have it then. Go and enjoy yourselves, and the blessings of God be upon all of you, more especially on the two hearts that are soon to be one. Run along, boys, and put yourselves outside the cratur."

"Hurroo! hurroo! More power to your elbow. Long life to the O'Grady!" cried the peasants, in a deafening chorus.

"Paddy go aisy," said Shaun-the-Post, leading the way out, with Arrah on his arm.

His heart danced with joy, and he felt prouder than ever a king in the world.

When the room was cleared, Fanny Power said, "So they have gone to get married. They have my good wishes, poor simple creatures. They seem happy enough."

"Happy as the day's long. Ha! whom have we here? Major Coffin, as I am alive. Take a seat, Miss Power, if you will have the goodness to excuse me for half a minute."

The door had opened, giving admittance to Major Coffin, an English officer, and in command of his Majesty's troops in the neighbourhood.

Fanny sat down and took up a book, but although not appearing to be so, she was an attentive observer of all that took place, not a word escaped, not a look was lost upon her.

Major Coffin was a good officer, but one very unpopular in the county Wicklow. This was owing to his being one of the strictest disciplinarians under whose rule the people of Wicklow had ever groaned. He always sacrificed mercy at the shrine of duty, and was never so well satisfied as when shooting or hanging a rebel.

His great wish was to restore the country to order, and he thought that if he could catch the M'Coul and make an example of him, it would strike terror into the hearts of the unruly, and bring about a peaceful state of things sooner than anything else.

When he heard of the robbery of Michael Feeny at Glendalough, his ire was raised to an intense pitch, and he determined to spare no pains to discover the culprit, and punish him for the audacious crime of which he had had the hardihood to be guilty.

After the usual greeting which good breeding entails upon its possessors had been exchanged between them, Major Coffin exclaimed—

"I have called to-day, colonel, to entreat your hearty co-operation to discover the perpetrator of a rascally robbery which was last night committed by Glendalough."

"A robbery?"

"Yes."

"Of what nature?"

"Most serious affair, I assure you. The rebel M'Coul's rents were confiscated by my order, and I sent one Michael Feeny——"

"Ha!"

"You know him?"

"For a scoundrel and a thief; but go on."

"To collect the rents, which he did; but on his way home he was robbed by some one, who also took his pass from him."

Fanny became interested on hearing this.

"Robbed by Glendalough," she muttered; "had his pass taken from him—the M'Coul's rents—why Beamish himself must have done it. Oh dear! when will my troubles cease? If this is true, all the O'Grady's exertions are useless. He has taken part in fresh disturbances, and the pardon of the government is so much waste paper, and good for nothing."

"As you say, major, this is serious," replied the O'Grady. "I had no idea that the country was still so much disturbed. That there were daring and obstinate spirits about, I know, yet, to rob a government agent—very bad, very bad."

"An example must be made."

"Most assuredly. Have you got any clue to the criminal?"

"Nothing decided, as yet; though Michael Feeny sent me word this morning that he was on the scent, and would meet me here, with information of a valuable character, at half-past twelve o'clock."

"It is that now, and here is Feeny," said the O'Grady. "Ugh! the reptile, the slimy wretch, my flesh creeps to be in the same room with him. Were I not a magistrate, and compelled to take depositions, I would very speedily kick him out of the house; it would not be the first time either that Michael Feeny and I have come in collision, and that he has been roughly handled."

Michael Feeny came forward with his accustomed gliding, crawling motion looking the incarnation of humbleness, holding his hat between his two hands, as if it were an heirloom, and he afraid to lose so great a treasure.

"Well, my man, what's your news?" cried Major Coffin.

"It's as good as it can be, major," was the reply.

"Out with it, then."

Feeny hesitated, and looked first at Fanny Power and then at the Englishman, managng, as well as he could to keep his eye on the O'Grady, from whom he seemed to fear a personal assault.

"Why don't you speak?"

"It's important, major."

"Well, what of that?"

"I shouldn't like what I spake to go beyant these walls."

"Certainly not. Who is to take it?"

"Axing your pardon, your honour, for making so bowld, but——"

Here he broke off abruptly, and pointed to Fanny.

"Oh! I perceive the man's meaning now, colonel," said Major Coffin; "he does not like to speak before that lady."

"That lady is my very excellent and good friend, Miss Power, of Cabinteely," said the O'Grady, indignantly.

"And just as friendly with the M'Coul," Feeny ventured to say, retreating to a little distance, and getting behind Major Coffin for protection.

"Oh! for a dog-whip or a yard of good blackthorn," cried the O'Grady; "I'd break every bone in the rascal's skin. One word more, sir, of your insolence, and manslaughter will be nothing to what I'll do to you."

"Better adjourn to your private room," said the Major.

"As you like, as you like," replied the O'Grady, impatiently; "I can answer, however, for Miss Power's discretion."

The three men entered a private room.

Fanny sprang to her feet, and running to the door, listened through the invaluable medium of the keyhole to all that passed.

It would have been better for her peace of mind had she not done so.

CHAPTER VII.

FANNY POWER BECOMES JEALOUS.

It must be borne in mind, that every word uttered by the three men who had retired into O'Grady's private room was heard by Fanny Power, and every word that she heard sank deeply into her heart.

The O'Grady seated himself, crossed his legs, and looked Michael Feeny hard in the face, as if he wished to read his thoughts through the expression of his features, and thus gauge the fellow's honesty, if, indeed, he were possessed of any.

The colonel thought that in all probability the rent collector was about to trump up some infamous accusation against some unfortunate individual, who, by his devotion to his country, had fallen under the ban and acquired the name of rebel.

Major Coffin stood near the fire-place, leaning against the marble mantel-piece, holding his sword in one hand, and some papers he carried with him in the other.

Feeny would have been glad to sit down, for he slept badly during the night, rising early, and walked some distance that morning, but his knowledge of the O'Grady's character was such that he felt positive that if he ventured to take such a liberty as to rest himself in a chair, he would leave the house quicker than he had entered it, and in a manner not at all congenial to his feelings.

Taking up a pen, the O'Grady exclaimed, "I presume, Mr. Feeny, that you have a deposition to make?"

"I have that same, sir."

"Very well. I am ready to hear you."

"At half-past nine last night, your honour, I was coming from Laragh with the M'Coul's rints in me pocket. They were gold and notes tied up in a canvas bag. I had got as far as Glendalough, when I was stopped by some one, and robbed of the Government money and me pass."

He paused.

"Is that all? Who was it robbed you?"

"I don't know, sir, though, thruth to tell, I think that I can point to the man, though it's not for the likes of me to say anything widout further proof."

"What is the man driving at?" said the O'Grady.

"Let him alone, colonel," replied Major Coffin, "I'll have it all out of him. He'll come to the point presently."

"It's just this, Colonel Bagenal," continued the process-server, "I've discovered the rebel's nest."

"Discovered what?" vociferated Colonel Bagenal O'Grady.

"I can put me hand on Beamish M'Coul," said Michael Feeny, whose little ferrety eyes sparkled with vindictive spite, gratified malice, and conscious triumph.

To point out the hiding place of the M'Coul was indeed an achievement, for to do so had puzzled all the king's soldiers and all the king's men for some weeks.

"You know where the M'Coul lives?"

"I do, your honour."

"This is important," said Major Coffin.

"If I don't know where he lives, I know where he slapes," said Feeny.

"Where is he now?"

"In the cabin."

"Whose cabin?"

"That of Arrah Meelish, at Laragh."

Oh! how Fanny Power's heart throbbed and beat tumultuously as if it must burst its frail tenement. Oh! how she pressed her hands together, so as to control her strong emotion!

Beamish M'Coul at Laragh! Mr. Beamish hiding away in a mud cabin—and whose cabin?

That of Arrah Meelish!

The shelter of other cabins was open to him—why should he seek shelter beneath Arrah's roof? if—he had not loved her. The thought was madness. While he professed to love one, in reality his heart was another's.

Oh! monstrous perfidy. Oh! inhuman cruelty.

And this was the man whom she had trusted, put confidence in, and loved—this was the man for whom she had rejected the honourable advances of the O'Grady.

That the M'Coul did love Arrah, and that he was trifling with herself, Fanny Power did not for a moment doubt.

Like all her sex, she was impulsive in the extreme, and she jumped to the conclusion without proper reflection; and having arrived at that conclusion upon what did she determine? simply that she would tax Beamish with his infidelity, and be revenged upon him for his supposed perfidy.

"Do you distinctly assert, my good fellow, that the rebel M'Coul is concealed in the house—or what d'ye call it—cabin of one Arrah Meelish?"

"Most decidedly I do, Major, and I have come here to-day to ax his honour the O'Grady for a warrant for his arrest as a rebel and a traitor to his Majesty the King."

"If he has no more than that to allege against the M'Coul," said Colonel Bagenal O'Grady, "I regret—or confound it, I must speak my mind—I'm glad I cannot grant him his warrant."

"Cannot! and why not?" inquired Major Coffin.

"Because I hold in my hand a pardon for the M'Coul."

"A pardon?"

"Yes."

"On what conditions?"

"Ah, you have me there," replied the O'Grady; "I was very nearly forgetting the conditions. The pardon is granted provided that M'Coul has not been actively engaged in any of the disturbances that have lately convulsed the county Wicklow."

Michael Feeny's face had fallen at first, but when he heard the conditions upon which the pardon was granted his face lighted up, and he assumed an expression of delight.

"Give me the warrant, colonel," he cried; "I can prove that it was he who robbed me last night at Glendalough."

"Where are your proofs?"

"Never mind the proofs just now, your honour. You can't ax me for them now. When he's on his trial I'll give them. All I ax for is your warrant."

Colonel Bagenal O'Grady seemed in doubt whether or not he should grant a warrant. It was clear that his leaning was towards the popular party, and that he would rather let the M'Coul go than hang him.

"I think, O'Grady, that you cannot hesitate in granting the warrant this man asks for," exclaimed Major Coffin.

"If his honour doesn't, I'll go to another magistrate who will," cried Feeny.

"Hold your tongue, you scoundrel!" shouted the O'Grady.

"Grant me the warrant, and I'll hould me tongue."

The O'Grady reflected a moment, and at length, though very much against his will, he granted a warrant, signed it, and presented it to Michael Feeny, who stood ready to receive it.

"I recave it with thanks, your honour," he exclaimed.

Having secured what he wanted, he made his obeisance, and shuffled away, muttering, "Ah! ha! I have him now. I'll spoil the widdin—I'll bring them all down into the dust. Divil doubt me. I have been after the M'Coul all weathers. I've had bitter thramps of it on cowl'd and cuttin' mornings: the very nose was nearly whipped off o' me. Throth, it was myself who felt like a sieve; and he robbed me. But the time will come—ay, it has come—it has, it has!"

As he said this he ran away with his warrant, eager to execute it, and place the M'Coul in durance vile. He hated Arrah because she was going to be married to Shaun; and yet, in the midst of his hatred, he loved her. If he could prove that she had sheltered the M'Coul he knew that he could place her in prison, and stop the wedding that was about to take place; therefore he wished to find the M'Coul on the premises.

He went direct to the barracks, and showing his warrant, engaged the services of a sergeant and a file of men, who placed themselves under his orders, and proceeded to Arrah's cabin.

Miss Power all this time was violently enraged. She made sure that Beamish M'Coul was deceiving her and playing her false. She fancied that her love turned to hatred, and that she would rather see him dead than the lover of Arrah Meelish.

Her mind was a chaos of ideas, and she went home without taking leave of the O'Grady, debating in her mind what she should do.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WEDDING.

SUCH is the power of love, that although the M'Coul had taken leave of his sweetheart, his soul failed him at the last moment, and he wished to bid her adieu once more on his way to a foreign land.

He wrote her a note, which he sent by a trusty messenger, begging Miss Power to grant him the favour of an interview at a wild spot some miles from both Laragh and Cabinteely, called the Devil's Glen.

Had he lingered at Laragh when he ought to have been able to make his escape and get away from the myrmidons of the law, whom Michael Feeny, the snake in the grass, was attracting together.

He was loth to leave Wicklow, the county in which he was born, in which beat many kind and loving hearts, and which held all that he thought dear. It was hard to be banished from each familiar spot, and from every well-known face, but the fell decree had gone forth, and go he must.

He had little else to do in his captivity—for it was little better—than to sing softly, as he lay hid beneath the thatch. Born in a wild, rude country, he was a child of song, impregnated with a wild love of melody. He could play more than one instrument, and would frequently extemporize a weird and thrilling

melody, such as made the pulse beat quicker, or else brought the tears into eyes that were generally free from those bright dew-drops.

On the morning of the wedding he was concealed as usual upon some rafters in the roof of the cabin. His eyes were moist, for he was thinking what his grief would be if fate were suddenly to hurry Fanny Power into eternity. He had a presentiment that something inimical to his love was about to happen, and allowing sad thoughts to steal over him, he sang in a pathetic voice a scrap of a ditty that had ever been a favourite one with him.

It was called "The Death of Zora."

"A coffin hid from my longing gaze,
Obscured as it was in a tearful haze,
All that remained of Zora.

"Her eyes were closed in a deathless sleep,

God bless her!

She neither heard nor saw me weep ;

Though my eyes were red and my sobs were loud.

And full low in the dust my head was bowed,

As I prayed that God might bless her.

"The choicest gifts, the sweetest flowers,

Warmed by the sun and nourished by showers,

Nursed in the lap of Flora,

Were laid on her breast by a loving hand,

As harbingers of a happy land--

Thy future home, my Zora.

"Let the bell toll,

Her angel soul

Has speeded on before her."

The last words of this affecting chaunt had hardly died away before the M'Coul recollected that the precious hours were fleeting, and the shadows lengthening told him that the time at which he had entreated Fanny Power to meet him was drawing near.

Descending with the utmost caution, he stole to the rear of the premises, and entered a huge barn, which had been cleared to make room for the wedding festivities.

Looking through a chink in the wall, he fancied he saw the glimmer of a bayonet in the sunshine.

Had some one betrayed him ? Could he be surrounded by soldiers ?

To rush out and defy them was folly.

Another and a longer look determined him in his impression that an ambush had been formed around Arrah's cabin.

What was to be done ?

The wedding party would return directly ; he expected them every minute. Their hearts were light and their limbs strong, while the distance between Laragh and Ballybetagh was not great, and could soon be traversed.

The priest would arrive at a later hour, and then Shaun-the-Post and Arrah-na-Pogue would be man and wife. Until the time for the ceremony arrived, many songs would be sung, many jigs danced, and much whiskey consumed by the "broths of bhoys" who had assembled to do honour to Shaun-the-Post and his blushing bride.

Suddenly a noise, as of a concourse of men and women shouting at the top of their voices, was heard.

It was the wedding-party.

The M'Coul ran up the stairs, and staid at the top, in a place from whence he could observe all that passed below, without being seen himself.

Could Arrah Meelish have betrayed him ? He knew not ; his mind was in a whirl, and he awaited the course of events with an awful impatience.

In came the Irishmen, lads, and and lasses, trooping along, having given themselves up to the pleasures of the hour with a happy abandonment, that almost amounted to childishness.

"Hurroo bhoys!" cried Shaun-the-Post. "This way for the cratur. In for a penny, in for a pound. Follow me; there's whiskey garlore, and you mustn't care a thraneen for anything else. Faix, and we'll kick up our heels this day."

The crowd followed Shaun-the-Post into the house, but Arrah Meelish contrived to remain behind. She was alone in the barn.

This was a conjuncture the M'Coul had been waiting for. In an instant he was by Arrah's side.

"Arrah!" he said.

"Misther Beamish!" she ejaculated in surprise. "I thought you was gone."

"I wish to Heaven I had left Laragh hours ago," replied the M'Coul, bitterly.

"And why would you be wishing that?"

"Because some one has betrayed me."

"Betrayed you?"

"Yes."

"Shure, Misther Beamish, there isn't a bhoys or a colleen in all the country side that would whisper a word that would harm the smallest hair of your head."

"Yet the fact is as I have stated it. The house is surrounded by soldiers, who, no doubt, only wait their opportunity. I am in desperate peril."

"It must be Michael Feeny, the bhaste! he it was that hung about the cabin all the morning. May the divil give him his best blessing!"

"What can I do, my girl!"

"I have it, your honour; climb up the wall at the back till ye reach a tree, spring to that, and you will get to the long grass, through which ye can crawl without the English imps as much as glimpsing at you."

"I will try. That is better than nothing."

"Yes, yes; thry, Misther Beamish, for the good God's sake, thry; the soldiers must not catch you. The bhoys shall make noise enough to prevent the soldiers hearing you. Lose no time, your honour."

"You are right. I have no time to lose. I acquit you of any participation in this piece of treachery, for such it must be. Good-bye; God bless you, and prosper your wedding, my child. I must go away."

He waved his hand and disappeared up the stairs, leaving Arrah Meelish in doubt as to whether he would be able to accomplish the arduous enterprise he had undertaken.

How fervently she hoped he might, how ardently she prayed for his success, and how eagerly and intently she listened for the slightest sound from without!

If he could only reach the tree without being perceived, and slide down the trunk into the long grass, he would be safe.

Her mind was so much absorbed with the peril in which Beamish M'Coul stood, that she was almost oblivious that the present day of grace was the happiest in Shaun's life.

She was overwhelmed with sorrow and shame, to think that there should be the remotest chance of the rebel M'Coul's capture, while receiving sanctuary in her cabin.

"Wirra, wirra," she cried in a plaintive voice. "Oh! that this heavy disgrace should fall upon me, and at this time, too. Is it the curse o' God that's fallen upon me for being desateful to poor Shaun? Wirra, wirra, and it's a sad time intirely!"

In the midst of her distress, she had turned her back to the door leading into the principal part of the cottage, and Shaun having missed her, had turned back to see what had become of her.

He approached her silently, and caught her in his arms.

"Oh! Shaun," she said, tearfully.

"Whist, darlint, and is it crying ye are?" said Shaun, regarding her with his expressive eyes full of affection and true love.

She laid her head on his shoulder, and sobbed aloud. Shaun-the-Post was at a loss to understand her agitation. He supposed, in his innocence, that the novelty of her situation had affected her, and he pitied her, talking kindly, and caressing her at intervals.

The company, as the party of merrymakers may be called, missed Shaun very much in the same way that he had missed Arrah, and they agreed amongst themselves that they would steal into the barn with the utmost gentleness, and surprise the loving pair, whom they supposed to be billing and cooing by themselves.

Noiselessly they entered the barn, and were lucky enough to see Shaun stoop down and imprint a loving kiss upon Arrah Meelish.

Then a tremendous shout arose, which made the time-honoured rafters ring again. Arrah and Shaun turned sheepishly to their friends, and Shaun said with a laugh—"The first kiss, you know the custom, boys."

A loud laugh arose from the men on hearing this, but the girls blushed, and turned away their heads, and pretended to be much annoyed and put out.

The custom alluded to by Shaun-the-Post was a very old one, and always observed at the celebration of Irish weddings.

When the bride receives the first kiss from the bridegroom, all the men present were entitled to steal a kiss from the girl they liked best.

This, of course, the women resisted, causing, by their resolute and prolonged resistance, a great deal of fun and hunting about. Perhaps this custom has something to do with the ancient form of capture in marriage ceremonies. This by the way.

The boys were not long in acting upon the hint thrown out by Shaun, and in a short time a tremendous romp was taking place. The colleens were running here, there, and everywhere, like so many hunted hares, screaming at the top of their voices, as the Sabine women might have done, when the Roman soldiers made a raid upon their territory, and carried them off *vi et armis*.

When all the requisite hugging and kissing had been gone through to the satisfaction of all present, order was restored, and Shaun was called upon to show his skill in dancing.

An old woman who, in the winter of life, had still a dash of summer in her composition, represented the County Connaught, and she challenged Shaun as the representative of Wicklow.

The inevitable fiddler was, of course, present, and mounting upon a couple of chairs, he pulled the strings of his instrument tight, and began to fiddle away with that amount of physical energy an Irish jig requires for its due and proper performance.

The pair faced one another, and the battle began, continuing for some time.

The Connaught lady evinced great saltatory skill, and a wonderful power of endurance, which ended finally amidst much laughter in the defeat of Shaun-the-Post, who covered with ridicule—good-humoured, of course—was compelled to acknowledge himself beaten, and to abandon the contest.

The Connaught lady was led back to her seat, amidst vociferous applause, her cheeks flushed with the exercise, and her eyes burning with the fire of other days, scintillating occasionally as the reminiscence of past triumphs and buried achievements was brought vividly before her.

After that, Shaun was called upon for a song.

The most famous rebel ditty at that period was the "Wearing of the Green," and it was a great offence to sing it. The "Marseillaise," or the "Parisienne,"

are not more strictly prohibited in Paris than was the "Wearing of the Green" in the days we speak of.

Shaun, however, considered himself amongst friends, and, without a word, told the fiddler to strike up the inspiring air which had the power of stirring every heart to an enthusiastic madness.

In a clear voice, full of pathos, he began—

"They've thrampled on poor ould Ireland,
And made the stones to weep;
And many a man they've hunted down,
Lies in his long, last sleep.

"The English they have done all this,
Our best blood they have shed;
Father and sons lie side by side,
Mother and daughters are dead.

"But they cannot kill the shamrock,
Of patriot signs the queen;
And they cannot stop an Irishman
From wearing of the green.

"They may shed our blood, and make the land
The wildest ever seen;
But every blade of grass pluck up
Before they kill the green.

"Then listen to what I say, boys,
And mark well what I mean;
As long as there's breath in our bodies
We'll all of us wear the green."

The applause which followed this ill-constructed and rugged ditty was loud and long. It had been listened to in the most profound silence. The eyes of both men and women had flashed with ill-suppressed rage; the corners of their mouths were drawn down; their hands tightly compressed; and their breasts heaved with an indignant fire, which showed that the volcano was not extinguished by the ironheel of the southron, but slumbered, biding its time, for a fresh eruption.

When silence was restored once more, Shaun-the-Post gave out the last verse again, and it was sung in slow and solemn silence, as if it had been a chant or funeral dirge.

CHAPTER IX.

MICHAEL FEENY'S BLOODHOUNDS.

AFTER the song with which Shaun-the-Post had favoured his assembled guests was brought to a conclusion, the whisky was passed round with rapidity, and everybody's spirits rose in proportion to the quantity of spirit they imbibed.

The priest was expected every minute.

When the festivities were at their height, the measured tread of armed men was heard, the clank of muskets, and the rattling of accoutrements also fell upon the startled ears of the peasants.

The big gates of the barn were flung violently open, and the sergeant, who had sung "Lillibullero," on the shore of Glendalough, marched in at the head of men with whom was the arch informer, Michael Feeny, his little grey eyes

twinkling like those of a ferret, and his thin lips pursed up into a triumphant rigidity.

The peasants made way for the soldiers, and the sergeant exclaimed, in a loud voice—

"I come here with a warrant, duly signed and delivered by Colonel Bagenal O'Grady, and by virtue of the said warrant I claim the right to search the cabin in order to effect the arrest of an arch traitor, who, we have reason to believe, owing to information that has reached us, is here concealed. Men, do your duty."

Four men detached themselves from the little column, and began to ransack the cabin amidst expressions from the peasants of the wildest astonishment.

Shaun-the-Post stood like a statue and never said a word. Arrah Meelish was in a sad alarm. She hoped that the M'Coul, to whom she was indebted for the roof that was over her, had escaped. If he had made the venture, it was clear that he had succeeded in getting off, for if he were the sergeant's prisoner, they would not affect to look for him.

It was an anxious moment.

Those who noticed her agitation, her abstraction, and evident pre-occupation, ascribed it all to conscious guilt.

The Irish girls are world-famed for their good principles and their virtue. To think that Arrah had concealed a man in her cabin, for nobody knew how long, was terrible to them.

Presently, Michael Feeny, who had heeded the party of searchers, came down the stairs, holding the M'Coul's coat in his hand. Beamish had taken off his coat so that he might be unencumbered, and escape with great facility.

"He's escaped! He's bate us this time!" cried Feeny. "But to prove to ye all that I'm no story-teller, here's his coat! Here's the coat of a man, found in Arrah Meelish's bedroom."

The M'Coul had carelessly thrown his coat down on a chair in the chamber in which Arrah slept, because it was through a window in that particular apartment he made his escape.

Little did he reck of the consequences which this simple act would entail upon poor Arrah Meelish.

When the peasants saw the coat, and looked in vain to Arrah for an explanation, they began to mutter and talk openly amongst themselves.

"Sergeant," exclaimed Michael Feeny.

"At your service," was the gruff reply.

"Arrest that woman."

"Which?"

"Arrah Meelish."

"The bride?"

"That was to be. I charge her with bein' an access'ry afther the fact and a participator in the proceeds of a robbery."

"You dhirty scoundrel!—you lying spalpeen!" cried Shaun-the-Post.

"It's thrue; by the piper that played before Moses, it's thrue. Don't let him touch me, sergeant dear. I'm on the king's business, and doing the king's work," shrieked Feeny, in mortal terror.

"What has the colleen done to you? What harm has she done you," asked Shaun, "that you should come down on her widdin' day, and destroy her happiness?"

"I'm only doing me duty," replied Michael Feeny.

"Arrah, darlint?" continued Shaun, "look up and spake the word which will give him the lie; spake up, darlint, for yourself and me. He took the coat up there himself, in coorse, bekaise it's all lies he's telling."

Arrah was frightfully pale, but she commanded herself by the exercise of an heroic effort, and standing up, exclaimed, "It's thrue, Shaun."

"What's thrue, darlint?"

"That he found the coat in the cabin."

"May I niver die in sin!" ejaculated Shaun, who was completely prostrated by this confession.

"Ha! you hear that, all of you?" shouted Michael Feeny. "It's lucky I've come this day. She confesses it; and now I'll have her searched by the soldiers, and may be we'll find a thrifle of money in her pocket that she's not come honestly by."

"The curse o' Crummle on yer!" cried Shaun; "bad luck to you, I say, Michael Feeny! There's not so black-hearted a scoundrel as yourself in the four quarters on the face of the airth! The gallows is gapin' for yer, and there are as many curses before you as 'ud blisther a griddle."

Michael Feeny turned white with rage at this furious denunciation, but contented himself with holding up the M'Coul's coat, with a glibing sneer.

Poor Shaun fell back, and sinking into a chair, cast one beseeching look on Arrah, which seemed to say, "Tell me all, I implore you."

But her countenance was stony and impassive, and she gave him no responsive look or sign.

Then his heart fell within him, and he buried his face in his hands, and appeared to take no further interest in what was going on. Not so, however. Every word that told against Arrah Meelish—his own loved Arrah—sank deeply into his heart like so much molten lead; he was sorely tried, but did not for an instant waver in his sworn love.

By order of the sergeant, two soldiers advanced through the thunder-stricken throng for the purpose of searching Arrah, who made no resistance.

She was fully determined that if they tortured and wrung her heart in every possible way, they should not induce her to betray the M'Coul, and she felt assured that when the truth was published and fully known to those who were now against her, she would be unanimously acquitted and praised for her determination.

Yet it was hard to be under a cloud on her wedding-day—very hard, very hard.

The soldiers were not very courteous. They looked upon the Irish as inferior animals. They were called "kernes" in Cromwell's time, and this epithet was applied contemptuously; and a couple of centuries later the English did not esteem them more highly.

They drew the roll of notes from the pocket of her dress—those notes which the M'Coul had given her, and on which the name of Michael Feeny was written.

On seeing them, Feeny snatched them eagerly from the soldier hands, and holding them up, said exultantly—

"I told you so. Here they are: my notes, my own notes, with Michael Feeny writ on the back of them! Will you belave me now? Take her to prison. Sorra a one of you will hould up your hand to save her."

No one moved.

"It is my duty to order you under arrest, Arrah Meelish," said the sergeant, coldly. "Whether you are guilty or not guilty will be duly determined by a competent tribunal appointed to try you. You are my prisoner."

This was Arrah's wedding-day.

Shaun-the-Post rocked himself to and fro, as if in great agitation.

CHAPTER X.

SHAUN'S SACRIFICE.

MICHAEL FEENEY thought that a good opportunity for making a little speech had arrived, and in nautical language he got his jawing-tackle in order, preparatory to saying—

"It goes agin the grain wid me to do this, but it's an example the government want to make. If the girl would only spake, and say who gave her the money, shure and she'd be let go. I'm only doin' my duty. Ye all know that a better-hearted, or a kinder man than meself, niver bruk the world's bread, that is, when people desaves it at my hand."

There was a faint laugh at this.

"Och! poor sowl, what an unraisonable crathur she is," continued Feeny.

He knew that these exculpatory speeches would deceive no one, without it was the sergeant, but they came to the tip of his tongue, and it wasn't often he had a chance of delivering his opinion on things in general to his countrymen.

There was a downcast, sly, uneasy, shuffling, cringing, slinking expression in his blank, straggling features, which would have stamped him as a hypocritical, mean, lying thief, in any court of justice in the kingdom.

Emboldened by the toleration he met with, the fellow, who hated Shaun because he was the accepted suitor of Arrah Meelish, pointed to the unhappy man, and cried with a diabolical chuckle—

"Look at him, he's showing the *garran dane*; ('white horse,' a term of cowardice;) he's desartin' his colours; he's——"

He brought his remarks to an abrupt conclusion, for the sergeant struck him on the back heavily with his fist, saying—

"Never insult a man when he's down."

The peasantry applauded this sentiment to the echo.

"Yes, I mean what I say," continued the sergeant, who was a good-natured as well as a brave man. "I'd make any rascal quiver on a daisy, who dared to kick a man in the gutter."

"Powers above," said Michael Feeny. "How folks get caught up and mistaken almost before they can say Jack Robinson."

"Hold out your hands," cried one of the soldiers to Arrah.

"For what?"

"The handcuffs."

"Stay a moment," said a gentle voice, at the man's elbow.

Arrah Meelish looked up, and was surprised beyond measure to see Miss Power, of Cabinteely, who had passed through the crowd unobserved. She had been attracted to Arrah's cabin by a wish to ascertain if what was alleged against her by Michael Feeny was matter-of-fact. She had duly received the M'Coul's letter, and if she found that he had been concealed in Arrah's shanty, she determined that he should never see her again.

It would have pleased her even to see him in Arrah's position, and in the power of the soldiers. Her jealousy was aroused, and she deluded herself with the belief that her love had turned to hatred.

"Of what are you accused?" inquired Fanny.

Arrah made no answer.

Miss Power looked inquiringly at the soldiers.

The sergeant approached, saying—

"The girl was accused, in the first place, of harbouring a rebel, miss."

"And was it true?"

"Yes, indeed it was; didn't I find his coat?"

"It is true."

"Divil a doubt of it; but he managed to effect his escape."

"Do you deny this, Arrah?"

Arrah shook her head.

"I came with the intention of pleading for you, fully believing you to be innocent," said Fanny Power; "but since I find you to be so thoroughly undeserving of sympathy and assistance, I can only say, it is my sincere hope that the military will do their duty, and take care that you are prevented, for some time to come, from exhibiting your leaning towards the rebel cause."

Fanny Power spoke in the fullness of her heart. She thought that Arrah had stolen the M'Coul's love from her, and that, while he was professing affection to her, he was merely trifling with her feelings. Arrah was astonished at this strong denunciatory language from one who had always been looked upon as a kind lady, and a good friend to the poor, and those who were in misfortune, bowed down and afflicted.

"Is it *you*, Miss Fanny," she said, "who's agin me?"

"Come along, no more trifling," said the sergeant; "we don't take you as a rebel sympathizer, but for participating in the robbery of the agent, Mr. Michael Feeny."

Arrah Meelish simply submitted to her fate. She held out her hands for the cruel irons.

Shaun-the-Post had not moved; but when he heard the click of the handcuffs, as they closed around Arrah Meelish's wrists, he sprang forward in a spasmodic manner, and speaking with the utmost excitement and rapidity, said—

"Stay, misther sergeant, the colleen's as innocent as June. It was me, Shaun, who robbed Michael Feeny, bad cess to him! and it was me who put the notes in the darlint's dress unbeknown to her. Hold aisy, misther sergeant, and take off those bracelets, bekase they seem somehow to be out of place, and I'd sooner they were put on me who's done it all, and it's not Arrah Meelish acushla, at all, at all."

When he had made this declaration, which incriminated himself, he appeared much easier; a load seemed to have fallen from his mind, and he was even gay; though it was not difficult to see that his jocularly was forced, and his spirits unusual.

"Take thim words back, Shaun, dear," cried Arrah, in an agony of terror. "Shure——"

She would have said more, but Shaun placed his hand upon her mouth, and stopped her utterance.

"I'm ready to go," he said, bravely.

Arrah sank into a chair completely overcome. Every one was surprised; but the sergeant contented himself with doing his duty. It was no part of his duty to wonder at anything: he therefore formally discharged Arrah from custody, and taking the irons from her wrists, put them upon Shaun-the-Post, who received them with the placid smile of a fanatic martyr, who, in a sublimated state of mind, considers himself raised above the petty miseries of this nether sphere.

The soldiers placed themselves near Shaun, and the sergeant gave the word of command. They marched away with their prisoner. Fanny Power followed them to the door of the barn, muttering to herself, in a semi-audible voice—

"It is as I feared. Alas! that poor country girl, uneducated, unadorned, except by her simplicity, has captivated the heart of Beamish. Perhaps he tired of his rustic conquest, and gave her the money which I am positive he took from Michael Feeny. 'Tis clear she loves him, whether his affection has waned for her or not. If she were not attached to him, is it likely she would preserve a dead and solemn silence, when a few words openly spoken would have in the first place liberated her, and afterwards have taken the fetters from Shaun's wrists? It is as clear as daylight, and I will be revenged on the M'Coul, whose perfidious conduct has aroused my liveliest resentment."

Fanny, with all her sagacity, was mistaken; and she afterwards bitterly re-

gretted having allowed her resentment to hurry her into the commission of what might have been a fatal blunder.

Thinking herself unobserved, she touched the sergeant on the arm, and said, "A word with you, if you please?"

"I cannot stop, miss."

"It is important; in fact, I want to give some information."

"About what—or whom?"

"The rebel chief."

"M'Coul?"

"The same," responded Fanny Power.

She did not remark that a little fellow, called Andy Regan, had stationed himself in an angle formed by the wall, and was listening with the most marked attention to all that fell from her lips. He, like the rest of the tenantry, was fondly attached to the M'Coul, and would have gone through fire and water for him. The utterance of his name was quite enough to make the sharp-witted Andy Regan suspect something.

"What of him?" demanded the sergeant, ordering a halt.

"Do you know the Devil's Glen?"

"I do not; but I dare say I can get a guide for the value of a tester."

"Hasten there, then; I say no more, except hasten there, if you would see Beamish M'Coul."

Having done this Judas-like act she sped swiftly away and hid herself from all eyes but one, beneath the shelter of a grove of trees; though she sped quickly, remorse followed her on the wings of the wind, and she would, five minutes after they had been spoken, have given the world, had it been hers to dispose of, so that she might have recalled the few and wicked words which had given the English sergeant the clue to the whereabouts of Beamish M'Coul.

Sitting down at the foot of a spreading beech-tree, she gave vent to an audible and heart-wrung lament.

"Oh! what a miserable girl I am," she said, with a choking sob. "I have destroyed him. Oh! yes; it is I who will have brought him to the gallows. Why could I not control my temper better, if he has deceived me?—and I may be mistaken."

She broke off; the train of thought was too maddening to be thought of and dwelt upon.

Before giving information to the sergeant, she had written a heartlessly cruel epistle to the M'Coul, which a messenger had taken to him. It now occurred to her, that if she were to hasten to the Devil's Glen she might reach the trysting-place before the soldiers, and, anxious to retrieve her error, she attempted the task on foot; but she had not gone far before the old feeling crept over her, and she once more persuaded herself into a belief in the M'Coul's affection for Arrah.

This was sufficient to check her impulse for good. She turned round, and, instead of going to the Glen to warn Beamish of the approach of his enemies, she went back slowly to Cabintee with a culture of remorse gnawing at her heart, and causing her the most intolerable anguish.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE M'COUL DETERMINES NOT TO BE OUTDONE IN GENEROSITY.

ANDY REGAN was as good a runner as could be met with in the County Wicklow; and on the present occasion he lost not a moment in running at the top of his speed to the Devil's Glen, so that he might warn him of his danger, and bid him fly ere the soldiers were upon him and it was too late to escape.

It was, indeed, fortunate for the M'Coul that Andy Regan happened to overhear Fanny Power's remarks, or the rebel leader would infallibly have been captured.

The Devil's Glen was a wild and rocky pass, such as are to be frequently met with in the hilly and mountainous districts of Ireland. It was inaccessible on two sides, and a place upon which the soldiers were not like to pitch as the resort of the rebels.

When Andy Regan came upon the scene he found the M'Coul sitting upon a large stone or boulder, reading a letter which a little fellow of the name of Patsy had just brought from Miss Power.

Patsy was standing demurely by, with his hands in his pockets, watching the expression of the rebel's features. He gave Andy a friendly nod but did not venture to speak.

"If you please, your honour," began Andy Regan.

The M'Coul was reading his letter, and a cloud was on his brow.

"Hold your tongue, sir," he cried; "can't you see that I am reading, and have you no manners to teach you that I am not to be disturbed?"

"It's my bad manners, your honour. I'll hould my tongue," replied Andy Regan.

Patsy winked, and smiled his delight at the snubbing which Andy had received, and looked at him as if he would say, "I told you so. Why didn't you follow my example?"

The letter was curt and to the point. It began—"Miss Power presents her compliments to the M'Coul, and begs to decline the interview he proposes. The M'Coul may seek an explanation of the change in Miss Power's sentiments towards him, in recalling to his mind his ill-concealed friendship—perhaps love is the correct word—for Arrah Meelish. Miss Power's most ardent wish is that the M'Coul's exile may be more honourable than his residence in his native land."

"Oh!" cried the M'Coul, aloud, in the first burst of grief, at the pain this letter caused him—"there's some mistake here. Some enemy has been at work seeking to undermine me in Fanny's estimation. I must clear it all up—a word will do it. Confusion overtake the scoundrel who has been the cause of this!"

He hid his face in his hands, and appeared lost in thought.

Andy Regan knew his information to be so important that he ventured to risk a personal castigation by breaking in upon the meditations of the M'Coul.

"Aixing pour honour's pardon," he said.

"Well," replied the M'Coul, looking up.

"I've a word to say."

"Where are you from?"

"Laragh."

"Ha! how goes on the wedding of Shaun-the-Post and Arrah Meelish?"

"Bad enough, your honour."

"Bad! How's that?"

"It's all broke up; more shame to Michael Feeny!"

"Broken up, do you say?" cried the M'Coul, crushing Miss Power's letter in his hand and rising.

"Yes, your honour. Feeny has got the soldiers to take Arrah-na-Pogue for robbin' of him, and then Shaun-the-Post he gets up and says 'twas him done it all, and then they take him and say they'll hang him for stopping of Feeny and aising him of his rints."

"The scoundrel! Shaun is a brave fellow; he must not die. This takes me by surprise, and alters all my plans," said the M'Coul, hurriedly.

"I've got more news, sir," said Andy Regan.

"Out with it, then."

"Some one towld the soldiers that you were in the Devil's Glen, your honour, and they're marching down here in double-quick time, from Laragh, and if your honour does not make haste and get out of it, the fat 'll be in the fire, and there will be fine frizzling."

"Some one betrayed me?"

"Yes, your honour."

"Who was it?"

"I'd rather not be telling it."

This reply was dictated by a feeling of delicacy which is seldom found in a man in Andy's obscure position in life; but the poor fellow knew that there was a sort of engagement in existence between Miss Power and the M'Coul, and he did not wish to hurt his leader's feelings by telling him who had betrayed him, for that the startling intelligence would wound him deeply, he did not for a moment doubt.

"Speak!" vociferated the M'Coul.

"Well, then, if it please your honour, it was Miss Power."

"Eh?"

"Her of Cabin-teely," added Regan.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before a well-directed blow from the M'Coul's fist levelled him with the earth.

"This is not a time to trifle with me," he said, angrily. "If you cannot speak the truth, tell me no lies."

Andy picked himself up, and looked at his agressor with a rueful visage; his red stiff hair was sticking up like reeds through the broken crown of his hat and the blood trickling down his face gave him a deplorable appearance.

"Shure, and you axed me for it," he said, in a snivelling tone. "I've only towld your honour the truth, and I say it agin, and your honour may knock me down and kill me intirely, but I'll stick to what I've said, bekaise it's 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' as they say in coort."

He took off his old caubeen, and holding it between his hands, scratched his head in an uneasy manner; then he pulled up the collar of his tattered cothamore or great coat, and appeared fully prepared for another assault.

The M'Coul was so taken aback at the man's persistence and equanimity that he felt inclined to believe the truth of what he had been saying.

Could it be true? Was it possible that a lady like Miss Power, of Cabin-teely, could be guilty of such an offence against the code of honour or the laws of humanity? Could she have been so worked upon by her jealousy as to turn traitress? It was almost incredible; yet it was within the bounds of probability.

Laying his hand upon Andy Regan's shoulder, he said—

"Pray forgive me, my good fellow. I was hasty and did not exactly like to believe you, though I was probably mistaken."

"That you were, your honour. Don't say no more," replied Andy Regan, eagerly; "but to stay here another five minutes will be aqil to your death. The soldiers, curse them, will be here. Do go, Mither Beamish, darlint. Sorra a bhoy in Wicklow but loves you."

The M'Coul was touched at this display of affection, and forgiveness of injuries received, which Andy displayed, and taking his advice, he said—

"I am ready ; do you be my guide and lead the way."

Andy needed no further bidding, but set off at a quick run, the M'Coul keeping pace with him the while, and the rear was brought up by Patsy.

They soon disappeared under the brow of a hill, and they were not a moment too quick in their movements, for in a short time the sergeant and his men, who had brought their prisoner with them so that no time might be lost, and hoping that they might be able to lodge two captives instead of one in the dungeons of Ballybetagh Castle.

When they reached the glen the soldiers, much to their mortification and disgust, found the coast clear, and knew that they had had their journey for nothing.

The M'Coul was strangely agitated. First of all, he had lost Fanny Power's love, but that, on consideration, did not trouble him much, for he knew that he would be able to regain it when all was explained.

What really did trouble him was the terrible dilemma into which the unhappy Shaun had tumbled by no fault of his own.

He determined to borrow a horse from a tenant of his and at once ride to Dublin, solicit the pardon of Shaun from the fountain-head, that is, the Secretary of State himself, and to declare the postman innocent, and say that he himself alone was to blame for the robbery of Michael Feeny, which affair, with its numerous unexpected ramifications of a disastrous nature, had been attended with such sad results.

This was an heroic determination and one that showed a noble spirit. The horse was easily borrowed, and the M'Coul mounted, much to Andy Regan's astonishment.

"God spade your honour !" said Andy.

"Thank you. I trust I shall be in time."

"For what, an' I may make so bould as to ax?"

"To save Shaun's life."

"Shaun's, is it?"

"Yes."

"We'll all be wishing you a good ride for that."

Setting spurs to his horse, the M'Coul dashed down the Dublin road at speed. A cloud of dust soon enveloped horse and rider, who were lost to the sight of Andy Regan and Patsey, who both uttered a characteristic exclamation of wonderment, and turning on their heels went in separate directions.

CHAPTER XII.

THE O'GRADY IS PUZZLED.

WHEN Major Coffin learnt the result of the raid his men had made upon Laragh, he sought Colonel Bagenal O'Grady to announce to him what he could not help looking upon it as good news. The O'Grady, although not a rebel in fact and deed, was a rebel sympathizer, for he knew almost every man who had joined the movement, and he grieved to see the blood of his unhappy countrymen poured out like water, and he dissented altogether from the severity of the views expressed by the English officer.

"I have good news to report, colonel," exclaimed Major Coffin ; "we have apprehended the man who robbed Michael Feeny. There is no mistake about his identity, for we have full and ample confession, which does not permit us to doubt."

"Pray who is the man?"

"A fellow called Shaun—a postman, I believe."

"Shaun-the-Post!" cried the O'Grady.

"Yes, that's the one."

"I'm sorry for that; upon my honour and word I'm sorry for that. What could have induced him to be guilty of so stupid an offence? The rascal might have known that if he was in want of money to stock his cabin I would have lent him a little to start with and make his colleen happy. Poor Arrah Meelish, this will be a heavy blow to her. What, major, do you intend doing with him?"

"I shall try him by court-martial to-morrow morning."

"Eh! what?"

"You know," said Major Coffin, "that the county is placed under martial law, therefore it is competent for me to summon a court to try this man—this Shaun-the-Post, and if found guilty, as I have no doubt he will be, I shall order him for immediate execution, so that summary justice of that sort may intimidate and strike terror into the minds of all those who are either rebels *de facto* or else disloyal in their hearts, and I am afraid very many are so."

"You cannot be in earnest," said the O'Grady, who turned very pale.

"Never more so in my life."

The O'Grady put his hands behind his back, and walked uneasily up and down the room.

"I was sent here," continued the Englishman, "in order that I might check the angry passions of the misguided people of the county Wicklow, and put down a rebellion which at one time had assumed a tangible, if not a formidable appearance. Please God I will execute the trust confided to me to the satisfaction of my most gracious sovereign."

"But, my dear sir, just have the goodness to reflect."

"I have reflected."

"In that case, you must be aware that the crime with which this man stands charged is, in reality, a very venial one."

"Not at all."

"It was his wedding-day, too."

"That makes no difference. He should have thought of all that before he was indiscreet enough to place the halter around his own neck; and it shall assuredly not be my fault if the noose is not drawn tighter."

The O'Grady stopped abruptly in front of the officer, and eyeing him narrowly, said, in a quick, sulky tone of voice—

"Major!"

"Well."

"You call yourself a gentleman?"

"I do."

"And you fancy yourself imbued with all the attributes of Christian charity?"

"I hope so."

"And yet you have the superhuman hardihood to decree this man's death?"

"I have no option," said Major Coffin, resolutely.

"Excuse me, you have."

"In what way?"

"Send him to the sessions. You are not strictly and absolutely commanded to try him by court martial. You can, if you like, exercise the discretionary power with which you are invested, and send him to be tried by a jury of his own countrymen, which is giving him a chance."

"Yes, and more. It is as good as letting him off altogether," replied the major; "and so you know, my kind and charitable colonel, what the result of such mistaken mercy would be. If not, I shall be glad to tell you."

The O'Grady bowed.

"The effect would be, an increase of strength in the insurrectionary move-

ment, more robberies, more murders. I could give you a catalogue of ills which would crop up like noxious weeds under the fostering influence of this sun of mercy."

"Never mind, throw all that on one side, and spare this man's life; I ask it of you as a personal favour."

"Impossible!"

"I, the O'Grady, ask you."

"My dear colonel, believe me nothing would give me greater pleasure than to oblige you in any one thing, did not my duty imperatively forbid me."

"Since I have been in this country, to which I came a stranger in the land, I have been chiefly indebted to you for your kindness and hospitality. You threw your shield around me, and I have been safe under its protecting covering—anything but that, do not ask me that."

"It is all I want, and you refuse me!" said the O'Grady, deeply mortified.

"I must be resolute in this matter, I must indeed, my dear Colonel," replied Major Coffin. "I hope the death of Shaun-the-Post will have a salutary effect upon the people of Wicklow. It will let them know that we are in earnest, which is always a great thing gained. Good morning! I shall see you again later in the day. You must excuse me now, for I wish to give orders relative to the court martial."

Colonel Bagenal O'Grady gave vent to a groan, a deep full, bodied groan, which came from his heart.

"The curse of Cromwell is still upon us," he muttered. "What's the use of killing this poor fellow, and on his wedding-day, too? The worst use you can put a man to is to hang him. Confound it all! It's a crying shame, I say. If the English wish us to love them, and become reconciled to the union, they must take different means, and leave off hanging us. Bah! I've no patience to think of it. If they begin with the peasantry, I suppose they will go on with the gentleman. Fancy the M'Coul dangling at his own door, with his neck broken; a pretty, pretty—i'faith, a very pretty picture."

"What's that you're saying, Colonel!" exclaimed a voice at his elbow.

Turning round sharply, as if on a pivot, the O'Grady's pleased eyes lighted on Miss Power, of Cabin-teely.

"I hardly know what I was saying, Miss Fanny," he exclaimed; "but the fact is, Ireland's going to the dogs. The English are hunting us down and hanging us till it would be a kindness to sink Ireland in the bosom of the Atlantie for a couple of days."

"Oh! don't say that. What would become of me?" said Fanny Power, with a light laugh.

"Pardon me for the thought; I was at the time oblivious of your welfare, and even of your existence."

"Though I was standing by you. How is it an Irishman's thoughts will get jumbled together and confuse themselves?"

The O'Grady did not attempt to solve this knotty problem, but stood before Fanny, gazing at her undeniable beauty, with all the sheepishness of a boy lover.

"I have come, O'Grady, to ask you a favour as usual."

"A favour of what description?"

"You have heard of the arrest of Shaun for the commission of a crime of which I do not believe him to be guilty. Now, colonel, I want to ask you to interest yourself on this poor man's behalf, and get him off."

"I firmly believe that you are interested in the whole male portion of the human race, Miss Fanny," said the O'Grady, smiling in his turn.

Fanny blushed slightly.

"First," continued the O'Grady, "it is the M'Coul, and when that rash individual has his sins against government forgiven him, it is Shaun-the-Post."

"But you will save him, will you not?"

"The man isn't condemned yet. I shall sit on the court-martial by virtue of my military rank, and he won't be condemned, if I can help it."

"You know what a regard I have for you, and you cannot be ignorant of the—the affection, dear O'Grady, which I have for some time silently entertained for you."

"Do you mean that?" said the O'Grady, enraptured.

"Do I? How can you ask?"

"Say it again. It was like honey in a flower to an industrious bee. I—I! 'Pon my word, Miss Fanny, I think you'll make a fool of me in my old age."

A shadow came over Fanny Power's face, flitting from feature to feature, until the whole became clouded.

"Oh! Beamish, once dearly loved, almost adored," she said, half aloud, "farewell, farewell for ever! I bid you a long and last adieu. I am about to transfer my allegiance to another, and you alone are the cause of my infidelity."

"Eh! What—what's that you're saying?" exclaimed the O'Grady.

Recovering from the transient fit of sentimentalism into which she had fallen, Miss Power said, hastily, "Nothing, my dear O'Grady; merely a monody on the death—I mean, the birth of love."

"I thought I heard you say something about the M'Coul, and you know, or perhaps you don't know, that the peasantry have been bold enough to take your name in vain when they should have known better; though it is an undoubted fact that they coupled your names together."

"Mischievous people," responded Fanny; "but of course you, my dear colonel, had sufficient sagacity and penetration to tell that there was not an atom of truth in the report."

"Upon my honour and word, at one time I did know what to think."

"And yet you obtained a pardon for a man whom you were induced to look upon as your rival?"

Oh, yes, that's true enough, I did that certainly," replied the O'Grady a little confused. "But then you know he was a Wicklow gentleman, a friend of my own, out of luck, and last of all, *you* asked me to get him pardon. I love you, and I can't help loving you; so of course it's my duty to do anything you may ask me, even if you do like some one else better than you do myself."

"You are a dear, good, generous fellow," cried Fanny Power, who was much affected at this evidence of the O'Grady's single-minded affection for her. "Oh!" she murmured, "if the treacherous M'Coul had only loved me as this man loves me, how happy we might have been together!"

"You sigh?"

"Alas! yes."

"For whom?"

"For—for my country."

"May every fragment of my anatomy be shattered if I understand all this!" said the O'Grady, who was beginning to grow puzzled.

The fact is that it did not take much to puzzle the owner of Ballybetagh. His honest head soon became entangled in a labyrinth of ideas, and he was altogether lost.

Fanny Power wanted to revenge herself upon the M'Coul, and she was more than half inclined to contract a hasty marriage with the O'Grady, but woman-like she could not make up her mind.

A fear came upon her that she might in some way be mistaken, and that by marrying in haste she would repent at leisure.

"How frightful," she said to herself, "would it be to marry a man in passion, and to find afterwards that there was nothing congenial in your tastes, that worst of all—grand climacteric—you loved another and kept his image enshrined in your heart, while you were compelled by the force of the marriage vow to

pay homage with your unwilling lips to the man whom you had made your husband in a moment of jealous frenzy."

"Oh! Adam," cried the O'Grady, "Why did not you die with all your ribs in your body?"

"You will save Shaun?" said Fanny.

"Yes, if he's condemned."

"Thanks for that promise, the faithful fulfilment of which I shall scrupulously exact."

So saying, Miss Power tripped lightly away, leaving the O'Grady alone.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THE M'COUL SPED IN DUBLIN.

BEAMISH M'COUL urged his horse to its utmost speed, and succeeded in reaching Dublin sooner than he had expected. There was every reason why he should make haste; because, were he to lag or tarry on the road, Shaun-the-Post would very probably be tried, condemned, and executed. Certainly Shaun's behaviour was magnificent; his heroism was fully equal to that of Arrah; she had sacrificed herself to save the M'Coul, Shaun sacrificed himself to save his betrothed.

It was very sad and painful that these young people should be separated as they had been on the eve of their marriage. They were young, and fondly loved one another, with all the enthusiastic adoration of adolescence.

The Secretary of State was in his private room at the Castle in Dublin. He was engaged in reading a report which had just been brought him by a messenger from Wicklow.

This report had been written by Major Coffin, and contained an account of Shaun's arrest, stating that in all likelihood the summary execution of Shaun would put an end to the disturbances which for some time had convulsed the country.

Suddenly the secretary's valet, whose name was Winterbottom, entered and said, "If it please your excellency, there is a gentleman down stairs who wishes to see you."

"A gentleman?"

"Yes, your excellency."

"How do you know he's a gentleman?"

"He gave me five pounds, sir."

"H'm! That is your test of gentility, eh?"

"Shall I show him up, your excellency?"

"Yes," was the curt reply.

In another minute the M'Coul was standing in the presence of the Secretary, who waited for him to speak, announce himself, and explain his business.

"I have called upon your excellency," said the M'Coul, folding his arms across his breast with noble resignation, "for the express purpose of giving myself up into the hands of justice."

"Your motive for this strange act?"

"Is my determination to save the life of an innocent man."

"Who is he?"

"One Shaun-the-Post, a humble Wicklow man."

"Pray may I inquire your name and standing in society?"

"I am Beamish M'Coul," replied the rebel, with a complacent smile.

"Ah! I know you, sir, by repute," said the Secretary, "though this is the first time that I have had the pleasure of seeing you. I am acquainted with the

facts of the case relating to Shaun-the-Post, for I have Major Coffin's report in my hand. It would appear that Shaun stopped one Michael Feeny and robbed him," "I stopped him!" exclaimed the M'Coul. "Pardon the interruption. It was I who waylaid Michael Feeny and took away the money he had in his pocket; and, after all, what was that? Scarcely an offence; for the money was my own."

"No," said the Secretary, "not your own, Beamish. It was confiscated by me, and therefore the property of the Government."

"Well, my lord, I am not here to argue the point with you," cried the M'Coul. "I am in your power. I have made a voluntary confession, and I hope you will at once despatch a courier on one of your fleetest horses to Ballybetagh, or Shaun-the-Post will have been hanged, and my confession of no avail whatever."

"Have you any further request to make?"

"Yes, one."

"And that is——"

"Simply this. If my death is decided upon, I beg the favour of a file of men, and half a dozen bullets. The M'Couls are an old family, and it is not recorded that any of them were hanged. I should not like to set an ignoble fashion."

This speech was delivered with a bitter smile.

The Secretary of State thought for a moment, and then exclaimed with a look of ingenuous candour—

"Mr. M'Coul. I am the representative in this country of His Majesty's government. Owing to a representation made to me by Colonel Bagenal O'Grady, some little time back, I granted you a pardon, on condition that you were not mixed up in any fresh disturbances. You have been; but your noble conduct in dooming yourself to death to save Shaun, has so far predisposed me in your favour, that I consent to renew the pardon, and by a scratch of the pen, to make you in less than five minutes a free man."

"God bless you!" replied Beamish. "This clemency is more than I had any right to hope for."

The Secretary took up a pen and began to write. Presently he handed two documents to the M'Coul.

"This is a pardon for yourself," he said. "That is a pardon for Shaun-the-Post."

"But the courier?" demanded Beamish, whose hand trembled with generous eagerness.

"You shall be your own courier. Go to my stables and take the fleetest horse you can find."

The M'Coul grasped the Secretary of State by the hand, heartily expressed his thanks, and ran down stairs with the precious documents in his hand upsetting the impulsive Winterbottom in his impetuous progress.

He had been some hours in the saddle, but he did not hesitate to start again on the homeward trail, after partaking of some refreshment.

When he reached Ballybetagh, he found a number of people outside the castle gates. They were the early ones who had assembled to witness the execution, for Shaun-the-Post had been tried and found guilty, and condemned to be hanged in front of the castle.

"It would be difficult to express the joy of Shaun-the-Post and Arrah Meelish when the good news of the double pardon reached them."

Fanny Power forgave the M'Coul for the imaginary fault which she had imputed to him, and, instead of a double execution, there was a double marriage, for Shaun-the-Post espoused to Arrah-na-Pogue, and Fanny Power became Mrs. Beamish M'Coul.

Thus happily ended a romance in real life, which might have resulted in a fearful tragedy.

CARRICKSHOCK;

OR, A PLEASANT EXCURSION.

"HARRY, my boy, you have never been in the county of Waterford?"

"Never!"

"Well, then," rejoined my gallant relative, Major Vokes, "you have now a good opportunity. I have some little business to transact there, so I've ordered my travelling carriage at six in the morning. We shan't be more than two days absent, therefore don't bring much luggage. The weather is remarkably fine, so we shall have a very pleasant trip;" and away went my excellent friend, whistling a cheerful air.

Now, although Vokes took my assent for granted, I felt somewhat doubtful about accepting it. That I had often expressed a wish to see the county into which he was going, I fully admit, and for this single reason, I suppose, he felt certain that I should snap at his proposal. But on the other hand, though I fully intended to see Curraghmore, yet I was by no means desirous of becoming the travelling companion of a man against whom a thousand oaths of assassination had been recorded; and as we were about to traverse Tipperary, a notoriously ill-disposed county, and going to a spot hardly fifteen or twenty miles from the scene of the most savage butchery that ever disgraced the annals of Ireland, namely, the murder of nineteen policemen and their officers, which had only taken place at Carrickshock the week before, I seriously hesitated about accompanying Vokes.

So far from it, I should (in any other case) have not only given it up myself, but have endeavoured to dissuade the worthy magistrate from his contemplated journey. I well knew, however, in his case, that the more vividly I portrayed the danger, the more delighted he would feel in courting it; so I held my tongue, and after dinner allowed myself to be persuaded, partly by coaxing and partly by the fear of being laughed at, into joining my friend.

We accordingly started the following morning; and after traversing the wretched bog which stretches itself between Limerick and Tipperary, arrived in safety at the latter town without meeting with any occurrence worth noticing.

Vokes ordered a substantial breakfast, and appeared in high spirits. He did not, however, tell me the object of his mission, and I refrained from inquiring. That it was a pleasing one I drew an inference from his cheerful manner, and I already began to laugh at my foolish fears.

The meal over, we descended, and to my utter surprise I found two horses, ready saddled, standing at the door.

The carriage had returned to Limerick; we were to complete our journey on horseback. I should probably have asked some questions, but Vokes enforced silence on me by a look, so we mounted and trotted off on the road to Nenagh, which my friend readily found, from the directions afforded to him by the ostler of the hotel, a most respectable-looking young man. We had scarcely, however, proceeded above three miles, when Vokes turned, without any apparent reason, down a cross-road, and rather increased his speed.

"What are you about? Where are you going?" cried I.

"Why, to Waterford, to be sure!"

"Why, I fancied you had changed your mind, and had intended to go to Nenagh—at least, so you said."

The Major burst out laughing. "Harry, I didn't think you were so soft. Why, couldn't you see, with half an eye, that the ostler was a bad boy—a spy—so I threw him off the scent, by coming round this way.

"By this time there's more than one carbine loaded to shoot me on that road.

Don't be flustered, there's no danger here. Yonder is the main road, and Sergeant Magrath waiting for us."

We were now joined by that active policeman, who was well mounted, and admirably dressed as a groom.

He had, however, a pair of holsters, out of which a brace of pistols appeared; but as many country gentlemen in those days carried arms, when riding through the disturbed districts, this fact did not betray the sergeant's calling.

When we came to a certain spot, just beyond the thick woods of Banshea, Vokes paused: "There's Lismackew; just in that corner poor Baker was murdered, in the middle of the day." I confess this little statement, and a subsequent detail of the assassination, with which my friend favoured me as we rode along, did not add much to my comfort, and I began to wish I had remained within the Barracks at Limerick, where I was at this time quartered.

Presently, a carriage dashed passed us, surrounded by police. These men I recognised as belonging to Vokes's especial force; they, however, took no notice of him, but galloped away in eager haste.

"Bless me, Major! what does that mean?"

"Oh, it's Quin, the approver; they are taking him to Kilkenny, to give evidence against Kennedy, the chief murderer at Carrickshock, who will be tried the day after to-morrow."

"But is this witness so unwilling as to require this guard?"

"By no means. My men surround the carriage to protect him; and even to do that they would not be able, if they had not relays of horses to enable them to gallop all the way. They go through no towns, and they travel too fast to be overtaken."

"But why?"

"Harry, my boy, you're as green as any Englishman I ever met. Don't you see, that if they could be caught, they'd soon be surrounded, and the approver dragged out and torn to pieces."

I shuddered, and rode on to Clonmel without uttering another word. Here we remained for several hours, Vokes evidently wishing to arrive late at Pilltown (the cleanest and prettiest village in Ireland); which he now condescended to tell me was to be our ultimate destination; and where, according to his settled plan, we alighted at Anthony's snug hotel, about nine o'clock the same evening. We supped, and went to bed.

The room in which I slept was, however, unfortunately, near the stable, and I was awakened more than once by hearing the voices of several persons conversing in a foreign language.

This, though an annoyance, but did not utterly destroy my slumbers; I was thoroughly tired; and I did not rise till nine o'clock next morning. Vokes was seated at the breakfast-table when I entered. He had evidently received and despatched several letters before I came down. He was sending off a mounted policeman as I opened the door.

After our meal, Vokes proposed a stroll through the village, at the same time expressing his intention to call on some of the cottagers, whom he well knew, as he had resided, for some time after his marriage, at Belline, a very handsome mansion in the neighbourhood, formerly inhabited by the brother of his wife, then acting as agent to the Earl of Besborough, but who was now abroad.

We entered a very pretty cottage, and, to my surprise, I found the interior as clean and neat as any similar establishment in England. It appeared that the noble landlord insisted on this—he might spare a man who could not pay his rent—indeed, he often did so. But he inexorably evicted a dirty or a drunken tenant, and thus made Pilltown the prettiest and best village in the South of Ireland.

The old woman whom we called to see was almost blind, but she instantly recognised Vokes, and to him she related her griefs.

Her grandson (a policeman) had been killed at Carrickshock, and she now hoped "the Major" would get her a pension from Government. She evidently believed he was all-powerful; and I fancy she was not very far wrong in her conjecture.

In the house we found two handsome girls. They had similarly lost their father, and the magistrate elicited important information from their loquacity.

I now began to observe that my friend was anxious to ascertain the details of the affair, for in every cottage we visited he managed artfully to derive some information on the subject. On two occasions the doors, as we approached, were slammed in our faces, and I could not help remarking that we did not meet a single male during the whole time we were out.

On these points I questioned the Major; who explained to me that the owners of the two residences, where we had been excluded, had both fallen at Carrickshock; but as they belonged to the murdering party, their relatives refused him admission—looking upon him as a dangerous monster. I expressed my wonder that they should thus be acquainted with his arrival.

"My dear fellow, we had not gone to bed last night, when every soul for ten miles round was aware that we were here, and it's precisely for that reason all the men are out of the way. To-morrow or next day we shall probably see them back."

This was by no means reassuring; and though I said nothing, I felt vexed at the idea of remaining in Pilltown for several days longer, which was evidently Vokes's intention.

During dinner, my friend explained the affair, which he was evidently investigating. It appears that about a week only before the then present time a party of nineteen policemen, commanded by a chief constable, went out after dark, in order to seize some arms, which they expected to find at a certain farm-house.

These men were dressed in uniform, and armed as soldiers, and fine efficient soldiers they were. They each carried a musket, a bayonet, and thirty pounds of ball cartridge; their officer was mounted on horseback—so of course they anticipated no danger, even in a country where every man (at least it was so in those times) looked upon a policeman as his bitterest enemy.

The party, being disappointed in their search, were returning home towards nightfall, and had arrived at a spot on the mountains called Carrickshock, when they were met by a countryman, who volunteered to tell them where the arms they were in search of lay hid.

The chief constable fell into the trap, and ordered his men to turn down a lane, at the end of which the peasant stated the weapons were buried (as is often the case), and to which spot he would guide them.

So down they marched, the commander going first, and beside him a civil officer, who had taken advantage of the strength of the party to serve some notices of eviction, under the shield of their protection. The lane did not exceed a couple of hundred yards in length, it was narrow, and a high bank on either side.

It was what is generally styled a "borheen" in the South of Ireland, and admirably fitted for an ambuscade. Suddenly the guide gave a loud whistle, and disappeared.

In an instant the notice-server fell dead; while on either bank appeared a large party of men and women. Before the policemen had time to come to the "present," a volley had been fired into them which told with fatal effect.

They fired, but it was too late, the crowd had now rushed down, and hemmed them in. The chief constable was one of the first killed, and before five minutes had elapsed, every policeman lay dead or wounded on the ground. The former were mutilated, and dragged about with yells of triumph. The wounded were pierced with innumerable wounds.

The arms were seized with avidity, and then the murderers (of whom only

three, I believe were killed) marched off, glorying in the act, and even singing songs of delight. They left behind them the bodies of the civil process-server, the chief constable, and nineteen fine young men, several of whom were natives of this town.

I naturally inquired if the assassins had been seized, as they must be known. "Known? to be sure they are; but what's the use of taking them up, when no one will give evidence against them? O, yes, you may be astonished, but such is the state of Ireland. The man's life who identified one of the murderers would not be worth half-an-hour's purchase. So government has only got hold of one of them, a certain Kennedy; but although the case is clear against him, although it will be as clear as light, you will see that the jury will not dare to convict him. Even at this instant he is standing before them. But enough of this; let's go and take a ride. Here, waiter order our horses out, and request the landlord to come up."

Mr. Anthony appeared.

"Anthony, I am going to take this young Englishman to see Belline, we'll take a gallop through the Park, and be back in two hours. We shall gain appetite by our ride, and would like something nice for supper.

"It is not eight o'clock, we should like to have it served at ten. Can you get us some trout? and mind there's a cucumber: you know how fond I am of it and if it's not too late for peas, let us have some."

The landlord (a most respectable man) promised all this should be attended to, and we descended and jumped on horseback.

I observed that we had military saddles, and that holsters were attached for each. After the narrative I had just heard, I confess I was not astonished at this; nor was I so, when I subsequently found that Sergeant Margrath had a sword on, under his horseman's cloak.

We rode direct through the grounds at Belline, and then went on to a road which led abruptly up the mountains.

There was a wooded angle which hid the onward course of this mountain pass.

Vokes walked his horse round it; but no sooner were we out of sight of the main route, then he uttered an exclamation in Irish, and galloped on. The sergeant did the same, and of course I accompanied them.

"Ride faster, man, ride faster, we shall be missed; keep up, Sergeant!"

"But why this haste?"

"You ride for your life; if they overtake us, we are dead men; and even as it is, there may be parties out looking for us! Ride on, man—don't spare the spur!" And thus we galloped on over six miles of the most hilly road I ever met with. Vokes now pulled up. "Harry, my boy, I think we've distanced them, so now walk your horse a little, for we have a long ride before us."

"My good and respected relative, are you gone mad, or what does all this mean?"

"Simply this. I clearly heard the voices in the stables of which you spoke this morning."

"Why, you denied it."

"Yes; fearful of alarming you. The fact is, they assembled last night for the purpose of destroying me. But as they thought it might prejudice Kennedy's trial, they put it off till to-night. At eleven o'clock they are to shoot us as we sit at supper. The Sergeant is to have his brains knocked out. In fact, every arrangement is made. Let me see, I find by my repeater it is past ten; they are now beginning to assemble, and will soon miss us; so we have no time to spare."

"But how is it they were so incautious as thus to proclaim their plans?"

"They spoke in Irish, a language I happen to understand. So there can be no mistake about it."

"Had we not better hurry on?"

"No, no. We are going up a terrifically bad road, let us go as easy as we can, till eleven, and then, as they will have discovered our flight, we must ride as fast as our nags can carry us."

At this moment the moon burst forth, and we saw a ragged, barefooted urchin, close to us; as is usual in Ireland, he at once joined the party, and entered into conversation.

Vokes whispered to me to be cautious. This I thought a ridiculous hint, but still I attended to it, though his "CAVE CANEM" appeared uncalled for in the present instance.

"What is the name of the town yonder, Pat?" asked Vokes, who at once assumed an Irish accent.

"Where, yer Honour?"

"Ah, now, can't you answer without making a bosthóon of yourself? Sure I'm a stranger, and want to know."

"I'm thinking it's Newmarket! Is it through that town yer'e Honour's about passing?"—At this moment the Sergeant's sword clanked. The Major uttered an exclamation of annoyance. The boy, however, did not appear to notice the sound, and went on talking.

We now came to a wind on the road; round this we had to pass, in order to arrive at Newmarket, which made the distance considerably above a mile, though, by cutting across the valley, the village might be reached in three hundred yards.

"Where's the boy?" suddenly cried the magistrate. We looked round—he was gone; but in less than a minute we heard three distinct notes whistled from the centre of the valley. "Ride, ride on, now's your time!" And away we dashed at full gallop. As we came in sight of the village, we saw a fine fire blazing in the smithy, and lights in almost every window; but as we approached, the smith's shop was suddenly closed, shutters were put up and every light extinguished. It was evident we were betrayed. "Keep up—keep up, Harry—that's all right!" and we dashed at racing pace through the town. We had just cleared it, when a shot was fired. The ball went through the Sergeant's cloak, but did not injure any of us. When we had proceeded about a mile, the Major pulled up.

"There, that will do; we're safe now; there is no fear of their following. There are not half-a-dozen men in the village, or they'd not have let us off so easy. Depend upon it they are all gone to Kilkenny, to hear their comrade tried."

Vokes was singularly gifted with perspicuity. He calculated every chance, and drew inferences from apparent trifles.

It was thus he sifted evidence, and seemed almost to foresee occurrences which to any other mind appeared unimportant and improbable.

We had not gone far, when Vokes suddenly turned down a lane; as a matter of course, I did the same: the Major, to my surprise, jumped off his horse, and beckoned Magrath to do the like; then leading their horses up to me, he asked me as a favour to hold them for a few minutes; of course, I assented.

In another moment the magistrate and the policeman were searching about for something which they appeared to have dropped.

They examined about, and seemed occasionally to pick up something out of the mud. At length Vokes suddenly called out to his Sergeant, "I've found it—I've got it here—this will complete the evidence. If it fits his hand, it will at once convict him. Oh, I'm so glad I've discovered it!"

At this moment the moon burst through the clouds, and I glanced with horror at the object which Vokes held up with triumph. It was a human finger, or rather half of one, evidently severed from the hand by a sabre cut. "What have you got?" demanded the Major. "I've a portion of skull with human hair

attached to it; I've the stock of a broken pistol, and a knife rusted with human blood," said the Sergeant.

"Providence preserve us!" ejaculated I. "Where are we?"

"In the Borheen of Carrickshock. Don't you see the bank all broken where the struggle took place? This dyke ran with human blood only a few days ago."

"Do let us go on; I don't like this place—it makes me shudder," said I.

"Well, as you like; I've got all I want. Here, Mick, take this finger; we'll fit it on Teddy Malony when we return; you may throw away the skull; but bring the knife along with you. Come, we'll warm ourselves with a sharp trot. We are only about eight miles from Kilkenny, where we shall sleep. *Allons!*" and away we rode.

We were within four miles of the city, when we heard loud shouts, mingled with occasional shots; an extraordinary glare of light was apparent in the distance, and we drew our reins, and reduced our pace to a walk, wondering what it could be.

Even the Major was puzzled for a few minutes; at length he divined the cause. "I'll stake my head, Kennedy has been acquitted, and they are escorting him home in triumph." Another ten minutes brought us in full view of the party, and, at the first glance, we read the correctness of Vokes's supposition. Shouting, singing, firing, and brandishing lighted torches, we beheld a body of at least five hundred men approaching. Drunk and inflamed by passion, they were screaming forth alternately blessings on Kennedy, and curses on every constituted authority.

In the middle sat the released murderer, who (many believed) had escaped his just doom, in consequence of the fears of the jurymen. He was seated on a small mountain pony, and was supported on either side by female friends, being wholly unequal to sit upright, in consequence of the libations he had indulged in; yet his fair partners still kept plying him with liquor.

An Irish bagpiper and a wretched fiddler acted as a band, and thus the procession was made up.

On they came, roaring and capering about in maddened ecstasies.

By the glare of their torches, they looked like demons; and my heart sank within me, when I considered how small was our chance of escape. If they caught us, we should instantly be sacrificed. If we turned back, our fate was no less certain. What could we do?

In my distress, I naturally turned to Vokes, and, to my horror, saw him smile at some incident which had occurred amidst the approaching crowd.

"We are lost!" groaned I.

"Giggy-ma-gow," replied the Major; "be alive, and there's no danger."

"What shall we do?"

"Follow me!" and, in one moment more, he had cleared a low hedge beside the road. We did the same, and, in another, we were all well concealed by a stack of wheat, which served us providentially as a shield.

On came the fearful multitude; they were now close upon us—they were not twenty yards from us—the slightest indiscretion, and we were dead men. It was a perilous moment. I do believe I trembled.

The infuriated wretches were, however, far too excited to think of turning their eyes away from their hero; and I can now, in cool moments, believe that even had we not been thus luckily concealed, they would not have perceived us.

They were fully five minutes filing past us. They halted a couple of minutes to raise a drunken man who had fallen, and seemed in no hurry to proceed.

How I outlived that period, I cannot divine; my every pulse seemed to stop, and I certainly did not breathe—at least, such is my impression.

Without a word, the Major stealthily stole out, and, about a hundred yards in their rear, jumped back into the road.

He and I succeeded in doing so without attracting any attention; but, unfortunately, the Sergeant's sword was loose in its scabbard, and, as his horse sprang over, it gave a loud "clank."

The crowd at once recognised the well-known sound; for an instant, they shouted, the "ARMY;" in the next, they cried out, the "PEELERS."

They turned round, and saw us by the bright moonlight. Half-a-dozen shots were fired by them in as many seconds; but they were far too intoxicated to take good aim, so none of the balls or shot touched us.

A party instantly quitted the main body, and started in pursuit of us—a fact by no means pleasant, as these men, when sober, can run for a short distance almost as quick as a horse can gallop.

"On! on!" roared the Major; and again we started at our utmost speed, and soon left our pursuers behind us.

In half-an-hour more, I sat at supper, in Kilkenny, with my daring relative, who laughed at my agitation, and endeavoured to assure me that it was "nothing at all!"

"It may be," said I, as I drank his health in a glass of old sherry; "it may be! But if ever you catch me on such an excursion again—if ever I accompany you on such a perilous trip—may St. Patrick withdraw his protection from Erin!"

SIFTING EVIDENCE.

An old couple had been murdered in their beds, and the cottage in which they resided had been burnt to the ground by the murderers.

The whole country heard with horror and dismay of the commission of this most flagrant crime; aware that it could alone have been affected by a numerous band, organized, and acting systematically.

Some two or three crimes of a similar nature had previously been committed; this being the case, it was deemed wise to strike at the root of the evil.

The government, by the advice of the local magistrates, proclaimed a reward of 3000*l.* for any information which might lead to the detection of the parties concerned, at the same time offering a full pardon to any one (not being the actual assassin) who would turn king's evidence, or, as it is styled in Ireland, become an approver.

But for several days these salutary measure were of no avail. Though great exertions were now made by every member of the magisterial bench, who began to feel no small alarm, since none of whom could say, whether one of their own body might be the next victim.

My friend Vokes on this occasion (as usual) said little, and seemed to take the affair extremely cool. But as I knew that he was hourly in communication with the Government, and continually sending his force about the country, I had little doubt that he was deeply anxious about the case.

He had gone for a single day to visit some relatives, and only returned on the following afternoon to a late dinner, which we will suppose I was sharing as this sketch opens.

"Any news, Harry, since I have been absent?"

"None whatever, except one or two visits from county magistrates, relative to this murder, and a heap of letters which have arrived for you."

"I've seen the letters, and read them. As to the case you speak of, I really think the less fuss made about it the better."

"Do you think you've got a clue to it?"

"It's impossible to say; but let us change the subject," and away he went into family gossip and public news—leaving me no opportunity to cross-question him further.

The dinner was over, and our first glass of punch just discussed,—by the bye, Vokes had a strange way of always mixing the best sherry with his grog—when the servant entered and announced that the “Major’s” car was at the door.

Now, as that worthy had only just arrived, I confess I thought the announcement strange.

Vokes saw I was puzzled, and at once explained. “The fact is I have important business to transact at Rathbane,” (his cottage, only one mile from the city.) “Will you accompany me?”

“Not I. You are going to run into some perilous affair, the danger of which I don’t feel inclined to share. I hope I may not shrink when called upon legitimately to risk my life; but, truly, I see no fun in these reckless exposures.”

“Bah! my dear fellow, there is nothing to alarm you here. I only want to examine some witnesses, and if you’ll come, I’ll promise you a bottle of the old claret you profess to like so well.”

“That alters the case; but you must promise not to walk off, and talk to your people, while I’m left to drink my wine without company.”

“Oh, as to that, if you don’t object, I’ll not leave the table. But I have yet to finish my second glass of punch; I always take one extra when I come in from travelling.”

“How far have you been?”

“Nabochlish avich? Will you come?”

“I will.”

“Let’s us be off, for I shall return here to sleep. The family will return from Kilkee within an hour, so let us make haste.”

I arose, jumped on the car, and in less than half-an-hour I was seated between a bright fire and a well covered table—as far as wine and desert went.

For some minutes my relative did not allude to the business which had thus brought him out of town.

At length he rang the bell twice, and Sergeant Reedy, one of his most favoured policemen, entered, saluted him in military style, and then respectfully awaited to be questioned or directed.

“You come in from Cahirconlish in charge of one individual?”

“I did, Major.”

“At what hour did you arrive?”

“At a quarter before three, Sir, this morning. I was anxious to get in before daylight.”

“And where did you fine the individual?”

“At the house of Captain F——, who said he had written to you.”

“He has. Has the man told anything?”

“According to your usual orders, Major, I forbid him to speak till he saw your honour yourself.”

“How were you dressed?”

“As a labourer, sir.”

“That’s right. I trust you were kind and friendly with this man, and gave him all he asked for?”

“Yes, Major; except spirits, which you always forbid.”

“Bring him in.”

“Yes, sir;” and away went the sergeant.

“These will explain to you my present business,” said the Major, throwing me over two letters. I opened and read them. The first was dated—Hall, near Cahirconlish. It ran thus:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—The bearer, Paddy Macauliffe, appeared before me this morning and gave me such important information relative to the late daring murder, that I have little doubt that his evidence will lead to the capture of the whole gang. I know Macauliffe well, and I am sure he may be relied on. He was present during

the whole affair, but did not take an active part. I therefore hope, that on the conviction of these wretches, Government will let him have the reward. I will be with you on Wednesday.

"Yours truly,
WILLIAM F—"

"P. S. I send him in under the care of Sergeant Reedy."

The second was thus worded:—

"Col. L— sends in a most important and respectable man, a tenant of his own, who it appears beheld the whole of the late savage butchery from a cupboard, in which he was hidden. Being a voluntary witness, and a man of some little station, he trusts that Major Vokes will take his information, which may be relied on, as quietly as he can, as the bearer Michael Tobin, is easily scared, and already feels alarmed at being sent up by a policeman (William Kennedy) whom Colonel L— has directed to accompany witness to Limerick.

"Green Hough, Co., Limerick."

"Well," exclaimed I, as I concluded these epistles, "I suppose you are delighted at thus receiving the information you so much desired."

"Faith, you'll see that in a minute." He again rang twice, and Sergeant Reedy appeared, ushering in a very well-looking countryman, dressed in the usual frieze coat, corduroy breeches, and black stockings, so generally worn throughout the county of Limerick; taking off his hat, and bowing slightly to Vokes, he stood with a smiling face, and a prepossessing countenance, awaiting his examination.

"You were at the affair near Rathkeale?"

"I was, Major."

"What took you there?"

"Sure I was drinking with my cousin, Mat Carmody, and, by the same token, I owed him for a small garden of potatoes; and says he to me, 'Paddy Doody,' says he—"

"I thought your name was Macauliffe?" interrupted the magistrate, with an insignificant smile.

"And so it is, your honour," replied the other, without wincing; "but I was just then thinking of this same Pat Doody, who was amongst the company, who guv me a puck on the ear because I called him a bad boy. Sure, my name's well known. Faith, thin, it's odd, that his honour, Mr. F—, did not mention it in his letter."

"Perhaps he did. But go on."

"Well, yer honour, after drinking for some time, who should come in but Corney Macphail, and thereupon there was a great whispering, and several of them looked savagely at me; and thin they drew aside, and talked, and seemed to differ. Presently Carmody comes up to me, and, says he, 'Aren't you a cousin of mine?' 'I am,' says I. 'Thin, sure, you wouldn't betray us—faith we'll make it worth your while?' and thin they swore me on the cross, and tould me they were going to attack the ould couple anent Rathkeale, and that if I'd join 'em they'd give me five silver shillings, and excuse me the bit of potatoes I owed him; so I consinted, and away we went—there were nine of us—but I only remarked five besides myself, and thim same were Mat Carmody, Michael the Fox, Martin Shea and his lame brother Bill, Pat Hogan, and myself. That's all I recognised."

"I thought you said Paddy Doody was there," intervened Vokes.

"Ah, thin, I forgot it; sure yer honour's right. But he went off to Americk y next day, so I did not heed mentioning him."

"Go on."

"Well, when we comes near the house, Mat Carmody crept in, and made sure they were asleep; and thin returning, says he, 'Come, boys, let's do the

work at once. Sure, they're nothing better than heretics—they haven't been in chapel these six months—so we needn't fear any harm will come of it; and with that we all rushed on, and with a great, big bludgeon Dan Hogan broke in the door."

"I thought you said it was *Pat* Hogan?" —

"Ah, then, sure I'm confused—I meant Dan Hogan."

"Was Michael Tobin there? You know him, I believe?"

"Ah, then, ain't he half brother to my wife's first cousin? I know him well—he was not there, I remember well. He went that evening into Limerick to bring out a coffin for Tim Sullivan's baby that died of the small-pock, or the likes."

"Well, go on; you say you attacked the cottage?"

"Faith we did, but I had no hand or part in it, barring the being there. Mat Carmody rushed to the bed-side of the old man, and when he wouldn't tell where his money was hid, Mat knocked his brains out with a hurley-stick, and took his keys from under the pillow. It was Martin Shea and his brother *think* finished the old woman; but I can't swear to it entirely, as there was no light in the room; but I certainly heard their voices while she was being throttled; and then we came down, and some of the boys got the watch and the money."

"And then they burned the cottage?"

"They did, your honour."

"Did you see them do so?"

"Sure I handed them the light, and seed 'em do it."

"They set fire to the thatch first—did they not?"

"That's what they did, Major, and sure the straw was so ould and so dry, and it tuk fire directly."

"You will swear to this?"

"I will. But sure they'll give me the reward they promised, for my life won't be safe after the trial, and all my own people will be against me, because I shall have hanged my cousin Mat. Oh, then, Major, you'll see to this."

"I'll see justice done—don't fear. Take this honest man out, Sergeant, and let him have some supper. I'll see him again presently. Take him out, and send in William Kennedy."

"Yes, Major," replied Reedy, and away went the policeman and the approver.

Vokes laughed heartily, but would not communicate to me the subject of his mirth. Presently Kennedy entered.

"Bring in Michael Tobin."

In a few minutes more, he stood before the redoubtable chief magistrate of police.

"You are Michael Tobin—a tenant of Colonel L——, I believe. Do you reside near Green Hough?"

"I live on the demesne, your honour," replied the new comer, who was dressed in a most respectable suit of clothes, and whose manner bespoke a far higher station than that of the last witness.

"You beheld the crime committed, about which Col. L—— writes?" The man appeared puzzled, and in his agitation nearly crushed his hat between his hands.

"You may speak out. Kennedy you know, and this gentleman is my near relative, so you may speak out. Tell me, then, how came you over to the spot?"

"Faith, Sir, I'm ashamed to tell the truth. But the fact is—ah, now, sir, don't press me."

"Out with it, Tobin."

"Well, then, if I must tell it, I will, though I wouldn't like it known. Sure

I went over to coort the servant girl. But when I got over I found she had gone to Dublin, and so I was about returning to Hough Green, when I heard a noise, and, on looking out, I saw two men forcing the door, and as I had no arms I hid in the cupboard in the servant's room."

"That was in the room upstairs?"

"It was so."

"Was it on the first or the second floor?"

"On the first, your honour?"

"You are positive?"

"I am, Major."

"Well, then, go on."

"Presently the old man went down, and there was a great scuffle, and he managed to wound one of the men with a carving knife; but the other fellow came behind him and shot him right through the head, and then the missus rushed down, and they shot her too."

"And what were the names of the men?"

"Bryan Quill and Pat Martin, of Pallaskenry."

"Could you swear to them?"

"I faith I could. Sure wasn't there a light on the table, besides a great big lump of a blazing fire. I've known the two men these five years."

"You are sure there were only two?"

"Quite sure."

"Was not Paddy Doody of the party?"

"Not he: sure he was out of the way—about the horse stealing affair in Tipperary."

"Was the house slated or thatched?"

"Slated, your honour."

"That will do. You may go now."

"But the 300*l.*, your honour?"

"Oh, we can't talk of that till after the assizes."

"Faix, that's hard, too."

"Is it?" Then suddenly turning round, in an angry voice Vokes demanded—

"Do you remember the pattern, in May last, at Patrick's Well?"

The man, with a pale face and quivering lip, admitted that he had been there.

"Do you remember knocking down James Murphy as you walked home with him, and taking his watch from him? You called yourself William Dawson then."

"Sure, Major," stammered the man, "it's not me you're speaking of?"

"Bedad, my good man, it is; and as you choose to deny the fact, I'll send out for James Murphy."

"Ah, thin, you wouldn't do that. Sure, even if I did the same, my present important testimony will overbalance that. You wouldn't be shaking, by such an accusation, the truth of a witness who is about to convict for you the two greatest rogues in the county? It was the master (Colonel L——) himself who told me my past faults (if I had any) would all be wiped out by this good act."

"And so they would be if your tale were true; but it's a tissue of falsehood."

"Oh, then give me the Book and I'll kiss it."

"Not I. I'll not hear you take a false oath. Have you not sworn that you were concealed in a cupboard upstairs?"

"And so I was."

"You are a perjured villain. The cottage of the poor old couple was all built on the ground-floor. So much for your truth. Kennedy, take him away, and let him be strictly guarded till my secretary has had time to draw up a committal for me to sign. No speaking—off with him;" and away went the false witness.

Major Vokes now rang his bell twice, and Sergeant Reedy entered. "Bring Macauliffe back." He did so.

"And now, Mr. Doody, are you not a precious scoundrel to try and hang five innocent men, merely to get this 300*l*."

"Oh, Major, I swear——"

"Silence, sir! You have already told us enough lies. You begin by calling yourself Macauliffe, when I happen to know that your name is Doody."

"Ah, thin, you see, I thought on account of that little affair at Tipperary you might not have believed me, if I did not call myself by another name—that was my rasin. Divil another had I."

"You said the house was thatched?"

"Didn't they set fire to it? Didn't I see them?"

"You did not, for you were hiding about at the time. And there's another little fact you are mistaken in. The cottage is slated, and not thatched, and so you have committed perjury. Take him to the country gaol at once, and as you return call on Mr. D——, he's a magistrate of Tipperary, and ask him to send an order to the governor of the prison at once, to send him over to Clonmel. The assizes open there to-morrow. There—there—no talking. Prove that I'm wrong, and I'll compensate you. Tell John to bring round the car;" and the door closed on this forsworn wretch.

"How horrible!" ejaculated I.

"It is, indeed; but I'm sorry to say these cases are not unfrequent."

"But do tell me; how did you know that the cottage was slated and built on one floor?"

"Oh, then, don't be bothering yourself. I'll tell you. When I said I was going to see my relatives, I at once started for the spot, and examined the ruins of the cottage in question. I then went on about four miles, and discovered, I believe, the actual murderer of the old people. He will be in our gaol, if my fellows are sharp, within an hour. I have taken measures."

At this moment Sergeant Macgrath, the best man of the police, after knocking, put in his head, and merely said, "Dillon is lodged safely, sir," and immediately drew back, and shut the door.

"I told you so," said Vokes, "but the car is ready; come along;" and away he went.

The last prisoner was hanged on clear evidence, and he confessed his guilt. The other two were transported.

DARBY DEAR.

ONE of the most frightful murders which had appalled the county of Limerick for some time had just occurred, and as the victim was a female celebrated for her beauty and her kindness of heart, the case enlisted even more than the usual sympathy elicited on similar occasions.

The murdered woman was the wife of a most respectable baker in Bruff, whose surname at this moment escapes my memory, but will probably be better recollected by those connected with Limerick in 1828, or thereabouts.

In Bruff the whole tale is well remembered, and persons of my own age will not be found wanting to confirm the details I now give. The christian name of the baker was Darby—a common name in the south of Ireland.

His surname we will assume to be Hogan, and having thus premised, go on with our sketch.

After discussing the news of the day with Major Vokes, with whom I had been breakfasting—after partaking of a somewhat large portion of fried salmon and eggs—for young dragoons are, or at least were, celebrated for their pow-

ers of mastication—I arose, and was about to leave the room, when my father-in-law called across to me, and in a careless manner asked me what I was going to do.

“Nothing very particular.”

“Come along, then, with me on the outside car. I am going to take a drive in the country—the fresh air will renew your appetite. Run up stairs and take off your uniform, put on plain clothes, and by that time the car will be round.”

“I assented, and speedily changed my appearance to that of a civilian.

“Where is the the car?” asked I.

“It’s in the back lane—come along,” said the Major, putting on his hat and taking up the horsewhip he generally carried. “We shall be back to dinner.”

Now the last observation, coupled with the fact of the carriage having been brought to a quiet spot behind our stable, instead of the front door, somewhat startled me; and when, on going out, I found Sergeant Macgrath mounted in full uniform in attendance, I began to think over the many scrapes and dangers I had gone through in Vokes’s company, and felt more than half inclined to draw back.

He saw this, and with loud laughter assured me that there was no danger whatsoever—that he was only going to see Tom Doolan (his senior chief constable, and a great friend of his), quartered in Bruff.

As Vokes seldom deviated from the truth. I felt quite satisfied, and jumped on the car, and away we went.

In less than two hours we arrived at Doolan’s quarters, and here we found the worthy C. C.

I now discovered that my father-in-law’s object was to inquire into the details of the late murder.

Mr. Doolan first supplied him with the most ample accounts of it, and added that he had been out two days and a night, accompanied by the wretched husband. But all in vain.

The police had taken up several persons on suspicion, more particularly a pedlar from the county of Cork; but after strict examination, the magistrates had felt it their duty to discharge them.

“What further course to take, I scarcely know. Tell me what shall I do?” said Doolan.

“Well, then, faith, do nothing at all. Go and fish in Loch Ghurr, or shoot snipes in the bog—or make love to the ladies, as you’re a handsome fellow. Do what you like; but leave this affair alone, till you see me again.”

Our friend, who was an active and intelligent officer, scarcely liked being thus thrust aside; but as he well knew his superior, he only laughed, and left us, directing the Major to the house of the bereaved man.

When we entered, the poor fellow was in tears.

When called on to relate the circumstances of the case, his grief was painful to witness; and no wonder either—for his wife, quite a young woman, had been a good wife to him, and a more attached couple had never existed.

The circumstances were easily detailed. On the Saturday evening previous, Hogan and his wife had taken a long stroll into the country, determined to enjoy the fine weather.

But as they were in their every-day clothes, they rather avoided the frequented road, and strolled through the fields.

At about three miles from Bruff, in a solitary spot, about two hundred yards from the road, they were suddenly pounced upon by a gang of three robbers, with their faces blackened.

They instantly seized the lovely girl, whose screams were loud and long, and she struggled so hard that it required the strength of two men to hold her. The third had seized Hogan, and held a pistol to his head. Hogan, however—a

man noted for his courage—watched his opportunity, and knocked his captor down, and instantly fled along the road, crying for help.

Presently he met some people coming back from Limerick market, and when he told his tale they instantly returned with him to the spot. But they were too late. The unhappy victim lay dead on the ground, her skull battered to pieces by the blows of a heavy bludgeon.

At this sight Hogan cried out loudly, and throwing himself on the body, fainted away. The peasants, terrified and shocked, raised the two in their arms, and conveyed them both back to Bruff. Poor Hogan was confined to his bed, occasionally raving during the two days following.

A coroner's inquest sat on the body, and brought in a verdict of "Wilful Murder." The poor woman had only been buried the night before we arrived. The husband seemed eager for vengeance, and suggested many schemes to Vokes by which the savage assassins might be discovered.

After a moment's pause, the magistrate turned round, and looking straight at the poor man, said, "Hogan, you had better accompany me into Limerick."

"Faith, Major, I'd rather not—for I'm still weak, and in grief."

"Yes, I know that; but perhaps your deposition may be necessary to bring these murderers to justice."

"Do you then think you'll catch them? Oh, then, I pray to Heaven you could."

"And yet you hesitate to come! It looks ill."

"Not I, Major; sure I'm ready."

"Yes, yes, my good fellow; but not in that dress. You must put on your Sunday suit, as we shall have to appear before the Bench: it would appear disrespectful to be seen thus."

"True for ye," rejoined the baker; and he quitted the room to change his clothes.

I saw by Vokes's eye, that he was pleased with some result; what that result could be I could not imagine, but I equally knew it would be no use to question him; so I maintained a strict silence, whilst the magistrate went to the window, and beckoned his sergeant up, to whom he gave some directions (apparently important ones) in Irish, and then dismissed him.

Hogan now came out, dressed in his best. His appearance was that of a quiet, industrious shopkeeper, rather above than beneath the rank of his fellow tradesmen.

To my surprise, however, Vokes was evidently in no hurry to drive away; for although the car stood ready at the door, he asked Hogan to give him a crust of bread-and-cheese and a glass of beer.

Now, as I knew that my relative eschewed luncheon, and positively disliked the food he had just asked for, I clearly perceived his object was delay.

The refreshments were, however, brought, and slowly partaken of.

Whilst we were thus employed, I heard a horse gallop away. In a quarter of an hour more, we were all again on the car, driving towards Limerick.

When we had travelled about two miles, we met Sergeant Macgrath, walking his horse in the direction of Bruff.

This fairly puzzled me; however, I said nothing, while Vokes, stopping the car, jumped off and held a few moments' conversation with the mounted man.

Then, jumping up again, on we drove, Sergeant Macgrath, to whose saddle I now perceived a bundle was strapped, following us.

At length we came to the spot near which the murder had taken place, when Vokes suddenly ordered the carriage to stop, then turning round, he looked straight at Hogan, and in piteous accents cried—"Darby, Darby dear, what are you doing?"

The affrighted man turned as pale as a sheet, and leaped from his seat. Vokes now faced to him, continuing to cry out in a voice bespeaking agony,

even in the high tones of a female—"Oh Darby, Darby! surely you would not murder me! Did I ever wrong you? Oh, Darby, have mercy on me!"

I really thought the major had gone mad; but imagine my astonishment when Hogan, throwing himself on his knees, screamed out, "*I confess—I confess it! But how did I know you overheard her—Oh, the Lord be good to me!—them is the very words!*"

"Handcuff him, Tinsbury! handcuff him! and bind him to the car." In an instant our coachman jumped down, and throwing open his top-coat, displayed underneath the green uniform of a policeman: in an instant more his orders were complied with, and the wretch was safely secured.

Sergeant Macgrath handed his brother constable his loaded carbine, and fastening his horse to a gate, jumped off, and accompanied the major and myself to the spot where the outrage had been committed, carrying in his hand the mysterious bundle.

We soon arrived at the fatal spot, when the sergeant opened his packet and produced a pair of shoes.

These were those that Hogan had just changed for his boots, and the several other articles of dress he had taken off in order to don his Sunday suit, by the desire of Major Vokes.

Macgrath knelt down, and having minutely examined the footprints, which still were visible in the soil where the struggle had taken place, carefully fitted them to the shoes he brought—they tallied exactly. Vokes then verified them himself.

The coat-sleeve was turned inside out, and a large patch of blood-stain found near the wrist; the trousers had been torn in the struggle, and sewed up again.

Vokes now began searching amongst the bushes, but without success.

On looking into a dirty dyke which ran by, he perceived a piece of stick lying in it; he desired his sergeant to take it out: he did so.

It was a short bludgeon, probably the one with which the murder had been committed.

The police magistrate now found himself possessed of enough evidence to commit the prisoner upon, and returned to the carriage.

Here sat the wretched man—pale as death, and sobbing like a child. "Do you know this stick?" asked Vokes, displaying the bludgeon he had found.

"Take it away!—take it away! Sure if I hadn't had it in my hands, I'd never have done it;" and he covered his face with his hands, and cried aloud.

We drove straight to Limerick county gaol, and there lodged the prisoner.

After dinner that day I asked Vokes, most earnestly, whether he had acted on any information, or merely on his own judgment.

"Well, then, I declare to Heaven, my dear fellow, I acted entirely on my personal observation. There was something in the look of this man; there was something in his overwhelming grief that at once made me think *he* was the murderer. Did you see how he winced when I proposed taking him into Limerick? But he fell at once into the trap, when I recommended him to change his clothes."

"And why did you do so?" interrupted I.

"Faith, I knew that if he had committed the crime, he had done so in the dress he had on, for he said he had walked out in his every-day attire: did you not remark him saying so?"

"Not I."

"Well, then, Harry, my boy, you'll never make a good thief-taker, for it is by these trifles we come at the greater truths. Did not you see me call in Sergeant Macgrath? Well, it was to tell him to go into Hogan's room, and as he left it to seize the clothes he took off, and gallop on to see if the shoes fitted the marks. Had they not done so, he was quietly to put the whole back again.

He met us, however, and told us they did. So I thought myself justified in trying the *ruse* I did, and through which the prisoner was brought to confess.

"But how did you happen to know the exact words?"

"I *chanced* it. I knew his Christian name was Darby, and calculated pretty accurately what the poor girl would have called out on his assaulting her. Even now I cannot be sure they were the exact words she used, nor probably is Hogan; but they were so like them,—so like the appeal she probably made—that he believed that some passer-by had overheard them, and thus in agony of terror admitted his guilt. But you'll see more strange scenes than this before you leave the country."

"And what will the other magistrates say?"

"Say! Nabocklish, my boy; haven't they been at me already? Two of my neighbours have already been at me, to blame me for thus taking up a highly respectable man,—while the principal magistrate, who lives near Bruff, has galloped in and offered to bail this excellent young man, whom he has known from his birth, to any amount. I, of course, refused—murder is not aailable offence. So my friend has gone down to the club-house, and is now probably engaged in writing a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, requesting his Excellency to remove me from my situation."

Vokes wound up with a hearty laugh.

"And have you no fear that you may have erred? Suppose this man is acquitted?"

"Suppose the skies were to fall? Here's your health!" and Vokes changed the subject.

At the following assizes, Darby Hogan was tried for the murder of his wife, and convicted on the clearest evidence (though wholly circumstantial) which could possibly be adduced.

The night before he suffered, he fully confessed the justice of his sentence; but to the last declared his firm belief that Vokes was gifted with *supernatural powers*.

AN IRISH ELOPEMENT.

IT HAPPENED to be dining with an English friend at Moriarty's Hotel, who, in company with another tourist, was *en route* to behold the glories of Killarney, when, after the wine had circulated more than once, I proposed an adjournment to Major Vokes's.

"Vokes!" cried the stranger—"Vokes! Surely you do not mean the chief magistrate of police?"

"Indeed I do."

"Then I shall certainly not accompany you. I detest his very name. He has been the cause of all my misfortunes."

"How so?" asked my friend.

"I don't say that he *purposely* injured me—I don't say that he acted improperly; but he was undoubtedly the cause of my leaving the army, and, to a certain extent, causing my character to be defamed."

"How is that?"

"Ah, do tell us."

"As I have said so much, I will. Call for some claret; for not one inch will I stir toward Vokes's—not I. And I think, when you've heard my story, you will say I am right."

He then commenced thus:—

"I had only joined the regiment about six months, when I applied for, and obtained leave for a fortnight on 'private urgent affairs;' and having done so,

left the barrack-yard in high glee. I was dressed in a new suit of mufti, and my heart was as light as youth, health, and hope could make it. My friend Thompson shouted out a wish that I might succeed, as I drove from the barrack-gate in one of those old tumble-down vehicles which formed the most respectable mode of transit some few years ago—yelept a post-chaise—or, as the driver denominated it, “*a poshay of the right sort*”—a term applied to every article to be admired, from a pretty girl to a poldoody oyster.

“But I forgot to explain, that at the time I speak of I was quartered in this very city and that I was now starting for Bruff, where I had been invited by Sir Phelim O’Dowd—or THE O’Dowd, as some of the people called him—to pass three days with him. Sir Phelim, I must observe, had extended his hospitality to me in the hunting-field, where I had won his heart by leaping a high ditch (a ditch being nothing less than a mud-bank in Ireland), and landing safely over the heads of a man and horse that lay sprawling on the other side in gallant style! Sir Phelim was wholly ignorant that I had met his lovely daughter at a race-ball in Limerick, and fallen over head and ears in love with her. Need I say I accepted his invitation, and now hastened to profit by it.

“Arrived at Castle O’Dowd—a modern square building, covered with white plaster and embowered in dilapidated verandahs,—I jumped out of my rickety vehicle, and at once sought the drawing-room, where the domestic forces were drawn up, evidently expecting my arrival.

Sir Phelim, after a cordial welcome, introduced me to his lovely daughter (little suspecting that we were already acquainted) and his maiden sister, a gaudily-dressed old maid of some forty-five years of age; then turning to his butler (for footmen are always called butlers in Ireland), ordered in the ‘red round,’ invariably offered to mid-day visitors.

“My Louisa looked more lovely than ever; the slight deception she was playing off, in thus concealing, for purposes of her own, our former intimacy, caused a most becoming blush to mantle on her cheek; and I’d have given half the estates of the Earl of Kingston—that is, if I had possessed them—to have sent papa and aunt out of the room, only for five minutes.

“Need I say how happily, yet how swiftly the hours passed! A stroll through the woods; a noble banquet with tables groaning beneath enormous joints (as is always the case in Ireland); a cooper of excellent claret; and some really good music from *my* Louisa—I call her *my* Louisa, to distinguish her from her old maiden aunt, who bore the same Christian name—seemed all to pass in a few minutes; and I could scarcely credit it, when Sir Phelim’s butler announced midnight, and told us that our candles awaited us in the hall. Such were the ways of the house.

“Elated by wine to a certain extent, and filled with the most romantic ideas of love, I was endeavouring to discover my room, which I had proudly insisted on finding without escort—indeed, I believe I had rudely told the old butler to mind his own business, sensitively believing his polite pilotage was proffered under an idea that I was not quite steady—I was, as I said before, vainly trying to find the door of the room that the worthy domestic had indicated, when a very smart female servant crossed my path, and bobbed an Irish curtsy.

““Come here, my ‘colyeen,’ said I, ‘and tell me which is my room?’

““Faith, it’s straight before your honour!”

““You are Miss Louisa’s maid?”

““That same!” says the pretty chambermaid.

“Now, wine may kill, it may enervate, it may confuse—but still, in its early progress through the mind, it affords inspiration. At least, so I found it. The reply of the pretty abigail at once filled me with a train of new ideas.

““Come here, *ma cushla*’ (for I found a little native Irish would win her heart); ‘sure you’d give a note from me to Miss Louisa?’

““Is it me would do it?”

"Faith, then, you will. Look here, darlint! I don't understand much Irish, but, in plain English, here's your reward, if you will;' and I held up a sovereign.

"Will a duck swim?" inelegantly replied the smiling Abigail.

"Wait, then, a moment, and I'll do the thing respectfully.' (This was a sentence I had picked up in Clare.) 'Wait, and I'll bring you the letter:' and I rushed into my room.

"I tore out a leaf from my pocket-book—took out my very best pencil-case (a gold one) and wrote:—

"DEAREST LOUISA,—Meet me near the front gate, at eleven to-morrow night—a post-chaise will be in readiness—to bless the affection of one who means honourably but who, enchanted on a short acquaintance, sets ordinary rules at defiance, the warm beating of his heart having long banished the cold dictates of his head.

'Your adorer,——'

"The note done, I sealed it with a love-seal, and delivered it *prepaid*, to the maid, who, for another sovereign, promised to bring me a reply within half-an-hour.

"My friends, did you ever await the reply to a love-letter? No. Then you can know nothing of my throbbing heart, my beating pulse, my feverish temples, &c. &c. &c., so well described by the poet. Suffice it to say, the maid returned; and, having pocketed another sovereign and accepted a kiss, gave me a note redolent of musk and closely sealed, and ran away laughing. I entered my room to read the precious missive.

"With trembling hands I opened it—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I really feel that I am acting most imprudently. But love is a maddening passion, which carries us off, even beyond the bounds of prudence. Fie!—I almost blush while I write the word, and comply after an acquaintance so short; but that short acquaintance convinces me you are a man of honour. I WILL be there.

'Yours,

'Alas! too much yours,

'LOUISA O'DOWD."

"Oh! how raptuously I kissed the dear note. I almost devoured it in my ardour. And yet, again, there was a nasty, selfish, intruding thought which said, 'Is this conduct not too hasty? Should she thus have succumbed on the very first attack?' But no! It was the effect of love! and I hushed every murmur—every scruple, as I fell asleep blessing my own, my adored Louisa.

"Shall I say how the next day was passed? Shall I say how my heart kept jumping up in my throat, and how I longed for the coming night? My Louisa kept her room. She said she had a cold. This was evidently feigned to conceal her agitation; and I amused myself by watching the vain attempts of a Captain O'Haggarty, who sought to win the love of the Baronet's sister. The old lady repulsed him with scorn. She evidently saw that he was a fortune-hunter, and as such treated him. She even appealed to me. But as I was busy with my own happy thoughts, and as I was by no means desirous of embroiling myself with the best shot in Tipperary, I declined, to the evident annoyance of the old maid, interfering on her behalf.

"After dinner, Sir Phelim, who had been more than cordial throughout the day, stretched out his hand and pressed mine; then, with a wink and knowing look, he drank—'Success to you, my boy; may you succeed in love and war. I suspect you take ladies like fortresses—by assault, eh, Harry, my boy?' then burst out laughing, and proposed to retire to the drawing-room.

"There was a bantering tone about my host that puzzled me. He seemed

what is called 'up' to something; but what that something was I could not divine. Louisa could, surely, not have betrayed me?

"The maid-servant might have been indiscreet, it is true; but then my abduction of his only daughter, would surely not have been a subject of merriment to her father. Even old Miss O'Dowd kept smiling; and the only one out of humour—for Louisa still kept her room—was the Hibernian captain.

"At eleven precisely we all gladly retired; and I listened at my door to hear that the house was quiet. In ten minutes all was silent; and as my watch told the half-hour, my bribed Abigail appeared, and with caution led me to the garden-gate, where a post-chaise stood waiting. She insisted on my entering it. I did so; and away went the maid to fetch her dear mistress. Oh, how impatient—how anxious I felt! Presently, a light footstep was heard, and in another moment Louisa was clasped in my arms. Her blushes were concealed by a thick veil; but, as I pressed her to my bosom, I felt her beating heart.

"With a wild hurrah! which I vainly endeavoured to silence, away dashed the postboys—for I had four horses on this occasion,—and away dashed the rickety old chaise. My Louisa sank into my arms, and, for the first time, I imprinted a kiss on her sweet lips; that is to say, making allowance for the envious veil which intervened. She sighed; she murmured; I could just catch my name breathed forth, when a seeming earthquake roused me from my dream of happiness. In the next moment I lay sprawling in the high road. The postboys had turned the corner too sharply, a high stone had caught the wheel, and the post-chaise, being fairly turned over, at once came to pieces, while the released nags galloped on for several yards, the post-boys having been hurled from their saddles. I jumped up unhurt. I rushed across and raised my adored Louisa, who had become insensible. In vain I strove to arouse her; all was dark. I raised her veil, but was unable to see her dear face; I could not really discover whether she was severely injured or not. Fortunately at this moment, I heard a horse approaching. I shouted with all my might; and to my great joy Captain O'Haggarty came up, and jumping from his saddle, instantly lent his aid. My cries had been heard, and a farm-servant approached. I explained in a few words my situation to the Captain, and he vowed to assist me. The rustic carried a lantern; we opened it, and cast the light on the face of my Louisa. Oh, Heavens! I can never forget the moment; I actually screamed with annoyance, while the Captain rapped out his most powerful oath. In my arms lay extended Louisa O'Dowd—yes, Louisa O'Dowd—but not *my* Louisa O'Dowd, but *old* Louisa O'Dowd, her antiquated and crabbed aunt. In my vexation, I let her fall into the mud, from which she instantly arose, seeming to have suddenly recovered in the most miraculous manner, and began to pour out a thousand maledictions on my now too apparent disgust.

"On the other hand, Captain O'Haggarty made use of the most insulting terms, the mildest being traitor! seducer! and abductor! I could not explain without comprising *my* Louisa, so I attempted no defence; but hurling defiance at him and his old love, I agreed to meet him at daylight, at the eighth milestone on the Limerick road, there to settle our dispute with pistols.

"A few words, and we separated. He carried off his venerable charge in triumph. Disgusted, irritated, and somewhat ashamed I sought the cottage of Tim Sullivan, the master of the hounds, who, though it was now midnight, I felt assured I should find still up, imbibing his fourteenth or fifteenth glass of toddy.

"The worthy squire—or the Master, as he is styled in Munster—welcomed me with a loud shout, and instantly ordered in a reinforcement of glasses and bottles. Then, turning round, he introduced me to Major Vokes, a handsome little man, with a cheerful smile on his face, who sat on the other side of the table sharing his liquor,—seemingly nothing loth to do so.

"I was delighted; for, truth to tell, I felt a conscientious scruple at asking Tim to be my second in the fast approaching affair. Yet, what could I do? It was hard thus to call on a man with a wife and half-a-score of children to embroil himself; but, on the other hand, if I did not get a second before daylight, O'Haggarty would probably post me as a coward. I had no alternative—at least, so I had supposed—as I sought Tim Sullivan's residence. But now a very proper person sat before me. He bore a military prefix to his name; he was doubtless a military man; the Fates had sent him to my aid.

"For half-an-hour I sat, quietly enjoying my toddy,—studying all the time how I should attack the Major. It was a bold measure; but I had no alternative. It is true he was a stranger; but among soldiers there is always a degree of masonic brotherhood. So I now only waited a good opportunity. Here, again, Fortune favoured me: Tim was called away by the sudden illness of a favourite hunter.

"I lost not an instant,—I at once addressed my proposed aid.

"Major, as a stranger,—I really want words to apologise,—but the urgency of the case must plead for me. Will you second me?"

"I really do not understand you!"

"Simply, then, 'tis this—I am abrupt, that I may make my communication before Sullivan returns—I have agreed to fight a duel at daybreak."

"And you wish to tell me this?"

"Yes, Major, in the hope of inducing you to become my second."

"Your second!—ha! ha! ha!—a capital joke. I understand!"

"Now, for the very life of me, I could not see why the Major should be so very merry. I am sure I did not feel so. He surely could not have misunderstood me. So I chimed in—

"You understand me?"

"Oh, perfectly! I'll be off now; but I shall be sure to be there,—at daybreak, I think you said?"

"I did."

"But I forgot the place and the name of your antagonist. You must tell me both, as I must be in time."

"My antagonist is Captain O'Haggarty."

"Oh! No wonder you are frightened; he's the best shot in Ireland."

"I'm not frightened, Major; but under the peculiar circumstances—"

"I understand!" replied Vokes; and again he burst out laughing. "Where is the rendezvous?"

"The eighth mile-stone on the Limerick road."

"That's right." He then took out a small pocket book and noted down all the particulars. Again he smiled, and rose, saying, "We shall be sure to be there," and left the room.

"That Vokes took notes did not surprise me. Many men with bad memories invariably do so. That his coming responsibility should induce him to leave his grog, I could understand, though it vexed me. But that he should not seek to know the cause of quarrel, or any particulars of the affair, I confess astonished me; while the words 'We will be there' puzzled me. But, perhaps, as an old hand, he intended to bring a surgeon, or—as is often the case in Ireland—a friend, to see the fun.

"I passed three long hours with Tim. I borrowed his pistols, but gave him no hint of my projected *rencontre*. I drank little; but chatted away till four o'clock, when Sullivan proposed to retire. We did so. In half-an-hour more I had slipped out, and was already on my way to the Limerick road.

"Although daylight had scarcely fully lighted up the heavens, yet O'Haggarty and a fierce-looking friend awaited my coming with bloodthirsty impatience. I confess I felt somewhat small in thus approaching him, unaccompanied by a second.

"Where is your friend, sir? I thought you understood the rules of these affairs."

"And so I do; he'll be here directly."

"May I ask who acts on your side?" demanded the fierce-looking man.

"Major Vokes," said I.

"What! is that your game?" shouted he.

"Coward!—poltroon!" roared the captain.

"At that moment Vokes galloped up, accompanied by four mounted policemen, and away bolted the man with the red whiskers.

"I arrest you both! Take their arms from them, Sergeant Hennessy," said the Major. "Gentlemen, you must accompany me."

"Infamous traitor!" roared O'Haggarty, frowning at me and shaking his fist. "Dirty coward!—whew!" and he gave a contemptuous whistle.

"Come along, gentleman; you must instantly accompany me to Sir Phelim O'Dowd, who, as the nearest magistrate, will, on my information, bind you both over to keep the peace."

"Shall I go on with my tale? No; it is too painful! I soon discovered that Major Vokes was at the head of the police; and, consequently, my application to him was quoted as an unmanly mode of avoiding this duel. O'Haggarty first posted me as a coward; then ran away with the old spinster. Miss Louisa O'Dowd the younger with truth declared that she knew nothing at all of the affair; but cruelly added—"the detestable coward!" My brother officers sent me to Coventry; and, in a fit of despair, I sold out of the army and became a settler in Canada; where I afterwards shot my best friend, because he foolishly, when elated by wine, jeered me about old maids and police inspectors."

THE TERRY ALTS.

In the year 1830 an agrarian system of aggression arose, bearing the name of Terry "Alt." Whence this strange appellation was taken it is impossible to say, though it was generally asserted at the time that the guilty parties borrowed the name of the most harmless and well-disposed farmer in the county of Clare to confer it on a very extensive and well-organized band of marauders, who, under the plea that sufficient land was not apportioned to the growth of potatoes and grain, amused themselves by digging up and thus destroying thousands of acres of land.

By every post, Government received notices of fresh outrages of this description. Bodies consisting of several hundred armed men, nightly passed through portions of the South of Ireland—more particularly through the county of Clare—and marked their footsteps by fresh outrages.

Vokes was, of course, as usual, very active in suppressing these aggressions, and, indeed, the particular district over which he presided he kept comparatively free from stain. But daily and hourly alarmed authorities rushed into Limerick to report fresh agrarian attacks.

By his advice, the troop (in which I was then a cornet) was ordered over to Newmarket-on-Fergus, and there took up its quarters. The presence of the military had the desired effect, and for several days no Terry Alts ventured into our immediate neighbourhood.

In the meantime the magistrates assembled, and after a solemn discussion agreed to declare to the Government their utter inability to put down the dangerous body who now threatened their property—concluding their report by an earnest appeal to the higher powers to send them further protection.

The reply to this was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary on record.

It simply stated that the Marquis of Anglesey, then Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land, would at once visit the disturbed districts himself, and that after personally making the requisite observations, His Excellency would take the best steps at once to put an end to the disgraceful state into which the local magistrates had allowed the county of Clare to fall.

In a letter written by himself, he informed Sir Augustine Fitzgerald, an old general officer of high standing in Clare, that he would pay him a personal visit at his hospitable mansion (Cahirgoran) in the course of three days, and further than that, after addressing the Bench, and enjoying the hospitality of the worthy baronet for one night, he would proceed to Cork the following evening.

All was now confusion. In consequence of the turbulent state of the county, every gentleman had, more or less, sent away his silver plate, and other valuables, to his bankers for safe keeping; and now began a general application for loans of such articles as might be deemed necessary to place on table before the impetuous Lord Lieutenant, who, if not received in first-rate style, might naturally (after his differences with the magistrates) look upon it as a slight.

Sir Augustine's plate was in Dublin; he would scarcely have time to obtain it, besides the risk and trouble of having it down for one day. So messengers on horseback were sent to every neighbour and relative from Dromoland to Hermitage, to swell out this metallic pic-nic.

The parties called upon responded most handsomely, and when the noble Marquis dashed into Cahirgoran Park, in a post-chaise and four, we were ready to receive him with military honours, and the hospitable General equally prepared to do justice to his exalted guest by a show of first-rate entertainment.

But, alas! the deeply-irritated Viceroy was not thus easily to be calmed; his "soul was in arms," and, spurning the proffered luncheon placed before him, he impatiently waited the coming of the magistrates.

They soon arrived, and after presenting a complimentary address to his Excellency, made their report, which was little more than an echo of their former communication. The Marquis could scarcely hear them patiently to the end; when, bursting out, he addressed them in a strain of unusual censure.

He positively averred that "he had marked each outrage as it occurred, and clearly perceived that had the landlords been more conciliatory, and at the same time more firm, those outrages would have at once been put a stop to."

"He had been received at every station where he had been delayed with an enthusiasm, a demonstration of joy, which Irishmen alone could display. Yes, if he could only instill his own ideas into the minds of his hearers, the South of Ireland would be as tranquil as the most peaceable district in the habitable globe."

Such were his ideas, and therefore he could not but regret that his counsel and advice had not been more generally asked and followed; and he most reluctantly confessed that he attributed much blame to the justices of the peace in the county of Clare.

To this tirade no one felt inclined to reply, though at least one-half of those present determined to retire from the Bench; parties holding the commission of the Peace in Ireland being not, as we have them in England, selected from the church, the army, or the ranks of placemen in general, but, *bona fide*, the most wealthy and extensive landholders, the most noble and independent men in the country, and consequently unused to be snubbed.

His excellency now went out on the front balcony, and addressed the peasantry.

He first slightly chided them for their misdeeds; but soon breaking out in a strain of exalted praise, he glorified the county; he magnified the people; he showed that the peasantry were the sole support of the land; he talked of Irish bravery and gallantry, of stalwart heroes and lovely women—in a word, he threw his whole affections amongst them, without reserving one grain for the indignant gentry who stood around him.

Need I add, that each fresh compliment was applauded to the sky, that cheer after cheer succeeded each other till they positively became deafening: the blessings called down on the "Hero of Waterloo" were so numerous that the "recording angel" could scarcely have found room to inscribe them; and while "Brave Anglesey's" name was still wafted to heaven on the breaths of hundreds of the Irish peasantry, that most excellent but impulsive chief retired, once more restored to thorough good-humour by the *Cade mille falthah* of the people he had addressed.

The offended magistrates by no means shared the joyous or confident feelings of the high functionary; but as they had promised to partake of the dinner provided for him, they sat down to it, and almost in gloomy silence discussed the elegant banquet placed before them.

The cloth removed, the loyal host arose, and after toasting "the sovereign," drank as usual, that of the Lord Lieutenant, dwelling on those bright and brilliant points of his Excellency's character which will live through future ages of history.

To his present opinions, he wisely and hospitably refrained from alluding.

As might be expected, his Excellency rose to reply. His ill-humour had passed away, and he now endeavoured slightly to make up for his severe animadversions of the morning.

But as he warmed on the subject, he became almost enthusiastic; and after pointing out to them the devotion of the peasantry to himself, the love they entertained for him, he earnestly besought them to copy his mode of treating them, and thus secure their warm affections.

"Yes," added his Lordship, in conclusion, "act as I do, and you will equally gain the same attachment. You see how they welcome me. They will then equally welcome you. I have but to hold up my finger, and they at once obey me.

"I will stake my life that I should walk alone through the country unmolested. My presence would bring peace amongst them. I only wish I could stay amongst them a longer period to soothe their irritated feelings. Yes, gentlemen, you may retire quietly to your houses to-night, for I'll pledge myself, from my thorough knowledge of the country, that no one will harm you. No agrarian outrage will be committed while I remain in the south of Ireland."

Content with this comparatively gentle address, the Viceroy sat down.

He soon after rose, which was a signal for breaking up. It having been predetermined that his Excellency would hold a general levee on the following day, those who were not staying in the house at once took their departure.

Few felt pleased at the manner in which they had been spoken to. A very few almost believed Lord Anglesey was right; but as they rode and drove through the splendid park at Cahirgoran, now lit up by a bright moon, they one and all agreed to attend the meeting on the morrow.

Tired by the fatigues of the day, I gladly sought my couch at midnight, and determined to take a compensation sleep, as I had ridden into Limerick and back early on the preceding day, previous on my official duties.

Need I then say I was soon sound asleep, and enjoying that delightful slumber so peculiar to early manhood, when suddenly a trumpet loudly sounded under my window, disturbing my then delightful dream.

Could I be mistaken? No, there it goes again. "By George! It's 'boots and saddle!'" exclaimed I, now thoroughly awake, and quickly jumping out of bed—for be it known to my non-military readers, that this said "boots and saddle" is an instant summons "to turn out and mount."

What this could mean I was fairly puzzled to guess. Could any accident have occurred to our illustrious visitor? Almost impossible.

Could any sudden rising require our presence to put it down? Not likely. Could any of the magistrates have been murdered on their way home. No;

they would not have called *us* out on such an occasion. What then could it be?

Eager to know, I rushed down to parade, and there met my commanding officer (Captain D——), who, far from affording me any information, seemed still more puzzled than myself.

The only clue he could afford was a written order from Sir Augustine ordering us at once to proceed to Cahirgoran House.

"It must then concern the Lord Lieutenant. But in this case why so early. I clearly understood he was only to be called at eight. It is now scarcely six o'clock?"

"We'll soon see," said D——. So ordering the trumpeter to sound the trot, we went off at the rate of some nine miles an hour, and soon entered the gates of Augustine's residence.

At a single glance we read the cause of our being thus hastily summoned. The whole of the noble, the beautiful park—more particularly around the house—was dug up: the grass that had for centuries been the ornament of the estate, the pride of the owner, was now turned most skilfully and effectually into a potato bed.

Not a sod of green pasture remained. *Four hundred acres* of brown mould now disfigured the approaches to the mansion.

Between midnight and five in the morning this leviathan atrocity had been committed under the very nose of their popular ruler. Before or since I have never heard of such a demonstration. I confess I never felt so taken aback.

Truly, Vokes had foreshadowed this.

He had not foreseen, or perhaps expected, such a wholesale effort on the part of the peasantry; but he had clearly and invariably pointed out the danger of attempting to humbug the people by blarney, or relying too much on what is called enthusiastic popularity.

A carriage and four stood before the house as we approached. His Excellency accompanied by a single aid-de-camp, stepped in.

I can never forget his mingled look of anger, disappointment, and disgust.

He drew down the blinds, and, ordering the postilions to drive quickly, started off towards Cork without even bestowing the usual salutation at parting.

We escorted him about half a mile, when his aid-de-camp dismissed us.

Thus, then, did he who flattered himself (as many others have foolishly done) that he thoroughly knew Ireland, go away—leaving behind him not only a practical admission that the local magistrates were in the right, but in his first moment of anger, when called up and shown the devastation which had been committed, he had fully admitted the error he had been guilty of in thus blaming those who were correct after all.

The levee was, of course, adjourned *sine die*, while the Clare authorities, having thus triumphed, doubled their exertions, and, by good management and a proper degree of severity, mingled with strict justice, soon after succeeded in putting down the "Terry Alts" without the assistance of a Waterloo hero!

THE COLLEEN BAWN.

THE powerful novel entitled "The Collegians"—the work of Gerald Griffin—not only made a great impression at the time when it was written, but has since been revived by its having been dramatized by more than one author, and in its every shape become a popular play—the most successful edition or adaptation being that of Dion Bourcicault, who, with Mr. Webster, produced it and played in it, at the New Adelphi Theatre, above 300 nights consecutively,

and thus made the unhappy story, under the title of the "Colleen Bawn" a household word in the mouth of every Londoner.

This unequalled popularity naturally introduced it throughout the provinces, and so general was its production, that I feel certain there are but few—very few—who have not seen or heard of this most charming and successful drama.

The plot of the stage version is, however, very, very far from a correct one, as regards facts.

The poor girl whom Bourcicault styles the Colleen Bawn was too surely destroyed, and happily the hero of the melodrama, as well as his servant, were brought to condign punishment. Nor can the correct tale be even gathered from the original tale by Griffin.

The work in question, written by him, was brought out within ten or fifteen years after the murder, and consequently the author was compelled ingeniously to alter the true facts, the less to wound the feelings of the culprit's family, who were then alive, bearing a high position in the city and county of Limerick.

Lest some who still bear the name may yet survive, and feel annoyed at a fresh reiteration of facts—naturally distressing to their feelings—I will pass over the early facts of the case, and maintain a strict silence touching those motives which led to the act of horror.

A true revelation of them might involve the names of two noble families, who, though of course in no way implicated in the crime, or cognizant of the unhappy circumstances which led to the immolation of a good and most innocent girl, might yet feel wounded in seeing their names once more appear connected with the fearful story.

As, however, I look upon the capture and punishment of the criminals as one of Vokes's most talented acts, I quote the story—omitting the names (as I said before) of those who might feel annoyed at being thus once more dragged forward, and only commence the sketch where the general editions of this tale end, namely, *some six weeks after* the murder had been committed.

We will therefore open the present narrative at this period, laying the scene in the beautiful and picturesque village of Glynn, where the unhappy girl had resided ever since her elopement with Mr. S——, who had now, however, almost quite forsaken that place—being deeply engaged (as it was said) in endeavouring to obtain the hand of one of the noblest and most virtuous maidens that graced the British peerage.

Eily O'Connor had quietly quitted S——, who however still retained, I believe, his cottage at Glynn, and left his confidential servant, a certain Sullivan, in charge of it, who however, only remained there a few hours and abruptly left.

The proprietor of the finest estate in the neighbourhood, and the master of all the soil around, was the then Mr. Fitzgerald, who boasted the honour of bearing the style of "Knight of Glynn,"—one of the *two* oldest titles in Ireland. The knight was, of course, a magistrate for the county, much respected and liked. But to return to my sketch.

The servant man, in that sort of confidence which is ever affected to spread a tale, informed the gossips that Eily had never *really* been the wife of Mr. S——, but that he had been deeply attached to her, and lest he might legally marry her, his family had insisted on his sending her off to America; and that she had gone there some ten days before with one hundred pounds in her pocket.

The man graphically described the parting, and as the possibility of such an emigration had before been hinted at, the statement was readily received and believed.

Some six weeks later the inhabitants of a few cottages near Glynn were horrified by seeing a female body washed on shore by the rough waves of the Shannon—which is here above a mile in width.

To recognise it was impossible, and its identity appeared lost, since it was a

mere *torso*, or trunk; the head had fallen off and all the limbs were gone—the outer dress had disappeared, and the present remnant of humanity was only preserved and held together by a pair of strong though old brown jean stays.

The trunk was at once conveyed to the dead-house of the village, in order that every one might see it—but not with the slightest hope of its being recognized.

Of course all the females and the male idlers in Glynn went to see it.

All looked at it, shook their heads, and turned away from it in horror. Although, truth to tell no one suspected foul play, the general belief was that some unfortunate female had fallen overboard, and that the length of time she had lain in the water had thus destroyed her form.

Amongst others who visited the dead-house was an old crone who only occasionally visited Glynn.

The instant she beheld the remains she exclaimed, “God be good to us! By the Virgin, that is the body of Eily——!”

The persons around her jeered at her, and reminded her tauntingly, that the young girl she mentioned had gone to America.

But no power could shake the opinion she had formed, and she went straight before the nearest magistrate (the late knight of Glynn,) one of the most upright men that ever lived, and reiterated her statement.

“Upon what grounds do you base your assertion?”

“Sure it’s no assertion, but positive truth.”

“Why do you say so? The trunk of one individual closely resembles another; then why say that this is the body of Eily——?”

“I’ll tell yer honour. About two months ago I got me a piece of printed chintz, and I am ready to swear that the likes of it did not exist in Ireland. It was not only peculiar in its pattern but in its colours.”

“But what has all this to do with the matter?”

“Faix, then, I’m coming to that. May the saints never look down on me, but the stays in the dead house are patched with that same chintz which I sold to poor Eily! Your honour, I’ll take my oath to its being the truth.”

Now this was a trivial circumstance; but the knight thought it worth while instantly to ride into Limerick, and into that city he caused the old woman to be marched between two policemen, then and there to be examined by the chief magistrate of the police, Thomas Philip Vokes, who cross-examined the woman in every way; but she was firm to her evidence.

Lest, however, she might be tampered with, the worthy magistrate caused her to be detained and carefully watched.

Vokes, as I said before, once on a track, sifted everything. The vessel in which poor Eily had been said to have sailed, had now returned. No such person had gone out in her.

About seven weeks before, and about the last time she had been noticed, she had been seen going out in a rowboat with Mr. S—— and his servant Sullivan; further inquiries suggested the fact that cries for help had been heard in the direction of a neighboring island; while one party distinctly swore that he saw the boat return with the two men but no woman, and had even asked about the circumstance from Sullivan, who told him in reply, that he and his master had taken the girl on board of one of Spaight’s ships, and left her.

Nothing could be more plausible, nor probable, and until the discovery had been made that she had never been on board that vessel, the fact did not appear suspicious.

Under these circumstances, warrants against Mr. S—— and his servant Sullivan were issued.

But the first was not to be found, and the second had gone to America. Of this there was no doubt.

The chief magistrate of police and the knight tried to apprehend the missing gentleman, but without effect.

It is true, he was known to be lurking in the country; but secreted and protected by his powerful relations, the task of seizing him seemed to be impossible.

Several well-planned attempts at capture signally failed, and months rolled on before anything could be done.

It was a dark evening when Fitzgerald, the knight, walked into the residence of Major Vokes, and in private made him a communication on the subject; the latter at once called out a troop of dragoons, and took with him a dozen mounted policemen. At their head rode the two magistrates.

They proceeded at a brisk trot towards the residence of Mr. M—— of S——, one of the most independent and influential men in the county of Limerick.

As Major Vokes rode through the park he spread the dragoons round the house, and communicated his directions to the officers.

He then gave a loud knock, the door was opened, and the functionaries instantly ran into the dining-room.

There some ten or twelve gentlemen were assembled, and on the left of the host sat Mr. S——. In a moment they rose and would have fallen on their intruders. S—— already prepared for flight, when, drawing out a double-barrelled pistol, the chief magistrate pointed it at the head of the accused. Fitzgerald did the same.

"There is no use in violence, gentlemen," said the former, "opposition is out of the question. I arrest Mr. S—— on a charge of murder, and whoever resists the capture does so at his peril. It is no use looking towards the door or the window; the hall is filled with police, the whole house is surrounded by dragoons. I arrest the prisoner, and shall instantly take him off to Limerick."

"And do you think this conduct gentlemanlike?—to enter a person's house and drag off his guest?"

"When that house becomes the refuge of a murderer, courtesies cease; there is no use in bandying words. Were he in the Pope's dormitory or the sanctuary of Westminster, I would equally drag him forth. Come, sir. Sergeant Reedy put on the handcuffs. In these cases there is no respect to persons. Captain, have the goodness to let your troop mount at once; we must not lose a moment in reaching Limerick. Be good enough to order your men to load their pistols and keep close to the policemen. Gentlemen," said he, turning to the murmuring party around him, "you see there is no hope of a rescue. Let the law, I beseech you, for once be executed without the shedding of blood."

By this time all was ready, and in two hours more Mr. S—— was a prisoner in the old gaol. Many of his friends had followed him at a distance; but the force which Vokes's foresight had caused him to take with him was too imposing to be lightly attacked.

A few days later Mr. S—— was brought to trial; an overwhelming mass of evidence brought forward clearly proved him to have been the actual perpetrator, or immediate participator, in this brutal murder.

As we shall have again to recur to these details, it is unnecessary to give them here; suffice it to say that the jury unhesitatingly pronounced him *guilty*.

At the same moment a post-chaise and four galloped from behind the court-house, in which was seated a county magistrate.

The carriage took the road to Dublin; simultaneously another similar equipage started from Moriarty's Hotel, also bound for the capital. They reached it in the morning.

The one traveller sought out the Lord-Lieutenant, the other the Lord Chancellor. Each of these functionaries was earnestly appealed to—"the honour of a noble family," "the improbability of the case," "only supported by cir-

cumstantial evidence," and a thousand other reasons were urged for extending mercy to the prisoner.

But the prayer of each was firmly refused, and the disappointed petitioners returned to their hotel, where they wrote for further influence. Twenty-four hours later the carriage of a most popular nobleman—bearing an Earl's coronet—sought the high authorities; but no audience could be granted. "*The law must take its course.*"

In the meantime the prisoner went on laughing and joking, apparently amused at the preposterous idea of his having committed such a crime.

He seemed wholly unconscious of his dreadful situation, and in this line of conduct he was, in all probability, supported by his proud relations, as well as by a thorough belief that he would receive a reprieve.

On the morning of the day appointed for his execution, the sub-Sheriff and the Chaplain visited him, and showed him there was "no hope." He must die! S—— appeared somewhat terror-stricken, and begged to be left for a few moments to pray alone.

This was accorded him. But on the return of the functionaries they found his eyes starting out of his head, and his cheeks flushed.

He had swallowed laudanum; but in such a large quantity as to stupify, not kill him. The usual modes were exercised to empty his stomach, and in a short time he was out of danger. Who gave him this poison he never divulged.

In consideration of his connexions, he was allowed to proceed to the gallows (about a mile and a-half off,) in a post-chaise drawn by two black horses, the property of Mr. Denmeade, an undertaker.

These horses were usually accustomed to draw a hearse; they were extremely quiet and gentle creatures.

The crowd was immense, and as S—— stepped into the chaise a shout of execration rent the air; but Major Vokes had so guarded the vehicle with police and troops, that there was no fear of a Lynch law attack on the part of the people, or a rescue on the part of his friends.

The horses walked on steadily till they came to the foot of Baal's Bridge, which spans a fast-running branch of the Shannon.

Here they came to a dead halt, and neither whip, spur, nor stick could induce them to move farther. That "*no horse will draw a murderer across a running stream*" is a strong belief among the Irish peasantry, so here they believed that they had a proof vouchsafed by Providence, which none could doubt, of Mr. S——'s guilt; so now they would have torn him to pieces if they could have got at him.

In the meanwhile every means (not omitting the burning brand, often used to start horses in Ireland) were employed.

One horse, however, kicked himself out of his traces, while the other deliberately lay down and refused to move.

Mr. S—— was requested to descend from the carriage, and with a pale face and faltering step he did so.

But on the whole it must be admitted he walked with tolerable calmness to the place of execution.

Here no news of a reprieve met him, and as he ascended the fatal ladder he seemed to have resigned himself to his fate.

He looked earnestly into the crowd and there saw many of his family. Their presence appeared to strengthen his resolution.

The chaplain then came up, and besought him on the eve of eternity to confess the truth. S——, however, again declared his innocence.

All but the sub-sheriff (John Cuthbert) and the executioner had withdrawn, and the cap was drawn over his face; the former stepped forward, and, seizing his arm, said, "In another minute you will be before the Judge who reads all hearts. Are you guilty?" "No!" replied the other, firmly, "I die innocent;"

and with this falsehood on his lips he was launched into eternity. The world will probable never again see such an example of family pride!

For several months after the execution the most fearful denunciations were fulminated against those who had thus (as they said) sacrificed an innocent man. Major Vokes and the Knight of Glynn were tabooed by half the respectable society in Limerick.

But the former was not a man to let anything drop, and while all supposed he had forgotten the case, he had sent out a confidential agent to New York, and found that Sullivan (the servant) had returned from thence to England. This was enough for him.

He despatched four of his sharpest policemen to London, and in a few weeks Sullivan was safely lodged in Limerick gaol. He was tried on the same evidence as his master, was found guilty, and condemned to die.

Now Sullivan was a Roman Catholic, and very properly believed that his best chance of heavenly forgiveness was to make an ample earthly confession; besides which he had no pride of family; so he sent for his priest and the sub-Sheriff, and in their presence made the following statement, which may be wrong in some minor particulars, as I have not heard of, or read of, this terrible murder for the last twenty years. But I give the details as I recollect:—

"My master and I," began the servant, "had agreed for several days to put Eily out of the way, and we only waited an opportunity. I was then and there to get 100*l*. and a free passage to America. Such was our bargain. Well, yer riverence, it was a lovely evening when my master proposed to take poor Eily (for he never called her his wife) out on the river for a row. Not a ripple was on the surface, so we three started together. I had a gun, as I said, to kill fowl, at the bottom of the boat. My master brought his flute, which he played merrily as we skimmed along. There is a little island about four miles from beyond Glynn, and here the master landed, desiring me to take Eily a further row. To this we assented, and away we went. When we were about 200 yards from the island I took up the gun and began talking about death. Oh, yer riverence, If ye'd heard her speak of it—had ye heard her call down blessings on the master! I raised the gun. 'What's that you're at; sure you'd not hurt poor Eily, who prays for you every night;' and she gave me the look of an angel. The fallen one himself could not have harmed her. So I threw down the gun and rowed back to the master, and told him I *couldn't*, I *wouldn't* do it."

"Upon this the master cursed me, and called me a coward, and threatened me if I didn't do it; and said he'd do it himself, only he could not go to Ameriky as I could, and he offered me more money down, and swore he'd purtect me, and all that."

"Well, at last I jumped into the boat again, and as soon as I got a few yards out I up with the gun, and, without looking at her, gave her a blow on the head with the gun stock which stunned her; she screamed, and the master, who was watching us on shore, began playing the flute to drown her cries. I struck her two or three times, till I thought she was dead, and then I lifted her and threw her into the water. I then took up the oars again, and was about to row for the shore, when she arose to the surface and grasped the edge of the boat. By this time I felt more like a tiger than a man, and I smashed her hands all to pieces with the oar. She let go her hold, and slowly sank. But as she died she gave me one look—oh! such a look—it haunts me at night—it pursues me in my pleasures."

"Even when I drink to drown remembrance, I see that last glance of poor Eily's. The master sent me away soon after. But I could not travel from her last look—I even fancy I see it now. I do believe it smiles, since I've told the truth—the whole truth!" and here the wretch made a most solemn asseveration of the truth of his statement. He was examined and re-examined. He

never wavered in a single particular. On the way to the gallows, he turned to the officer who guarded him, and declared that since he had confessed Eily had appeared to him no more, and on this fact he built his hope of being forgiven. On the scaffold he acknowledged his guilt, and confirmed all he had previously stated.

At the last moment the priest said to him—"You are about to enter into eternity. Are you guilty? Did Mr. S—— plan and assist you in the crime?" "As I hoped to be saved, he did!" and the next moment the culprit had ceased to live.

I have here endeavoured to sketch as correctly as I could the facts of a case which will ever be remembered by the inhabitants of Munster.

Many versions have been put forth, but I feel confident that mine is an exact and unbiassed statement.

All the parties interested and engaged in this fearful affair have, I believe, passed away. "May they rest in peace!"

TRIED AFFECTION.

"I HAVE asked you, my dear Vokes, to call on me, in order to consult you on an affair of some importance—at least, as far as my family circle goes," said L. D.—to the chief magistrate, as that functionary entered his counting-house.

"Indeed! If I can be of any service pray command me."

"You remember Mary Toovey, whom you recommended me as a trustworthy girl to assist in looking after my children some six years ago?"

"I remember her well. Her father was an honest fellow in Adare. His daughter was brought up at P.'s Sunday-school."

"Most true; and until within a very few days I always looked upon her as one of the best behaved young women I have ever met with."

"And you have had reason to change your opinion of her?"

"Unfortunately I have. You must know"—and here L. D.—dropped his voice. "Unfortunately, I say, I discovered that I had been systematically robbed of a series of small sums, and, watching closely afterwards, I still perceived that these pilferings unhappily continued. It could only be some one under my roof that thus abstracted small sums; and as I have a stable-boy of somewhat loose habits, I at once suspected him, and accordingly I marked some pieces of silver and placed them with two or three one pound notes in my drawer, leaving my keys, as if by accident, on the table.

"Having thus laid my plans to entrap the thief, I went out to dinner and returned too late to make any search that night.

"On the following morning I went to the place where I had deposited the cash, and here, to my great horror, I found that a bank note and three half-crowns were missing.

"Without telling them why I summoned them, I called up my servants, and having locked the door, stated to them what had occurred, and called on the pilferer to confess the crime, and thus earn pardon.

"None, however, admitted the alleged guilt, and I now, with their cheerful permission, proceeded to search them.

"Imagine, my dear Vokes, my horror, when, after vainly searching the servant man and some of the females, I turned to your *protege*, and having ordered her to display the contents of her pockets, I discovered two of the half-crowns which I had marked, and could now distinctly swear to. I called upon Mary to explain this strange circumstance. I eagerly demanded to know how she had become possessed of them. But, alas! all in vain. She was

dreadfully agitated, and was only relieved from a fit of fainting by a copious flood of tears which came to her relief.

"She is now downstairs in charge of a policeman. I wished if possible to avoid the pain of sending her, whom I have known for so many years, to prison, and therefore I wrote to ask you to call on me, and if possible, assist me in discovering the particulars of this distressing affair."

"Has she had any followers—male or female?"

"None."

"Has she ever absented herself away from the house?"

"Never."

"Does your family know what has passed?"

"No; they are all at Kilrush, with the exception of my eldest son, who assists me in business, and he went last evening to Waterford, and will not return before four o'clock. So, strange to say, not a soul is aware of the discovery I have made."

"Call in the girl—let us examine her together."

The poor culprit came in, more dead than alive. When she saw Vokes she covered her face with her hands and burst into a flood of tears.

For several moments she was so convulsed that even the stern magistrate hesitated to address her.

At length, after causing her to be placed on a chair, and having swallowed a glass of water, she became calm, when he thus spoke:—

"Mary Toovey, I am summoned here to interrogate you relative to a robbery which has taken place in this house; and as part of the money, marked for the purpose of detection, was found upon you, I have every reason to believe that you are guilty."

"I am! indeed I am. I am a wretched girl, sir," cried the prisoner throwing herself on her knees before him.

"And yet, religiously and well brought up, I can scarcely believe that you could have acted so base, so ungrateful a part, as thus to rob your employers. I would rather have suspected any one in the house than you."

"Oh, sir, indeed sir, it was I. I am a wicked, bad girl, and I confess the crime."

"Are you sure that no one instigated you—no one advised you to commit this robbery?"

"No, sir—no one. It was all my own doing."

"And still I think it is my duty to inquire further. I will, if possible, discover your accomplices."

"I have none—I alone am to blame."

The worthy merchant now chimed in: "Mary, I am told, by Michael the groom, that he saw you two nights ago talking with a strange man in the garden."

"It's false—it's false."

"Have you mentioned this to any one?" asked Vokes of L. D.

"To no one."

Vokes again turned to the girl, "Are you still determined to admit your guilt?"

She had now recovered her calmness, and answered firmly, "I am!"

"Do you know the consequences? Do you know that if found guilty you will receive a fearful punishment?"

"I do."

"And still to save yourself you will not betray your accomplices?"

"I have none. I alone am guilty—I confess it."

"Take her away, sergeant. I must inquire further into this affair;" and trembling far less, seemingly relieved at having thus unburdened her conscience, the wretched girl was led away.

When she was gone, the Major turned round and addressed his friend.

"If you do not insist on it, I will not commit this girl till to-morrow. In the meantime we may discover her accomplices. It's very strange—very! But, by George, I can't believe Mary to be guilty."

"But her own admission—the money found on her?"

"All true; such proofs should be convincing; but still I am not satisfied. Do me a favour. Come you, and your son, to dine with me to-day, at six o'clock, and we'll talk it over; but mind, don't mention the circumstance to a single soul on earth—not even to your own son. Don't write it to your family: and if any one asks you for Mary, say she's gone to Adare to see her friends. Pray do this, and you will oblige me."

"Certainly you make a strange request; but I'll strictly attend to your directions, and be at your house, with my son George, at six. Perhaps it will be better; for my wife and daughter, and even George, who is generally very distant and haughty, is very partial to the girl. I can assure you, Major, we have treated her rather as our child than our servant, which makes her conduct the more detestable."

"True for you; but now, adieu. Remember—six, and silence." And off went the police functionary towards his office.

On arriving there, he called for Macdonald, a young policeman whom he often entrusted as a messenger.

"You took a note from me to young Mr. D——, some evenings ago, relative to lending him a hunter?"

"Is it Mr. George you mean?"

"I do!"

"Well, sir, I delivered it to him, and he said there was no answer."

"I am aware of that. Where did you find Mr. George?"

"In the billiard-room beyond—in George street."

"And what was he about?"

"Well, your worship, I can't rightly say; I didn't much observe. But I saw him drinking and smoking."

"Was he betting?"

"Ah, then, Major, I can't say surely; but I think he was, for one of the young officers from the barracks called out and said, 'You've lost, George;' and so I suppose he was, your worship."

"That will do," said Vokes, and then proceeded to try one or two cases of drunkenness and riot which were brought before him for judgment. Presently he got up, and putting on his hat, he strolled leisurely up George-street.

On arriving in front of Mr. S.'s shop—at once a place for refreshment, the supply of tobacco and punch, with a billiard-room attached—he turned in, and after partaking of a sandwich, he carelessly asked the female who was at that instant serving behind the counter, whether Mr. G. D—— had been in lately.

"Not since yesterday morning."

"What did he call for then?"

"He came to get some cigars, as he was about to go out of town; and he left a pound-note with me to hand to Captain D——, that he had lost on the races."

"Have you got that pound-note?"

"No, sir," replied the girl, who seemed startled at the inquiry.

"Did he pay you for the cigars?"

"He did."

"How did he pay you?"

"With a half-crown piece."

"Have you got that half-crown?"

"I believe it's still in the tobacco till. I hope, Major, it's not a bad one; it

may bring me into trouble." And fearful of being mixed up with the transaction, she examined the till with anxious care, and at length triumphantly pulled out the piece of money in question. "Here it is, sir; sure I didn't know it was bad, and I'm sure Mr. George didn't. Here it is." And she handed it to Vokes, who, after peering at it with great curiosity, put it into his pocket, and then throwing down two shillings and a sixpence, carelessly said—

"Don't you see, I suspect there's some bad money in Limerick, so I'll take away this piece. But don't tell a living soul what I've done, or faith I'll have you up for a witness."

This threat was quite sufficient to render the girl dumb. So Vokes, without further conversation, walked up to his cottage, where he was carrying out some improvements.

At six o'clock precisely, Mr. L. D—— and his son arrived in George-street, and shortly afterwards partook of a most excellent dinner, which I was lucky enough to share.

No other guest was present, and all appeared in high good-humour; and drank their fair fill of claret before the punch apparatus was placed on the table.

This done, Vokes desired the seryant not again to disturb him till he rang the bell.

Well knowing the habits of the chief magistrate, I saw that something was coming.

"Mr. D——," said he, addressing his senior guest, "you have now my permission—nay, I may add, my request—to tell your son and my son-in-law here of the dreadful occurence which has taken place in your family."

The worthy merchant did so, in the fairest manner.

During the recital George D—— appeared more agitated than I should have expected.

He evidently was dreadfully shocked, and seemed to bear a true affection, for the poor girl, and as his father concluded he violently exclaimed,

"I am sure she is not guilty. I'll stake my life she is not."

"Can you then point to any other person as likely to have committed these robberies?" asked Vokes.

"Me? me? certainly not. What should I know about it?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing; only you are wrong thus to acquit Mary without proof."

"But I have proof. Her established good character, the manner in which she has always proved her worth and respectability—"

"Are strong, I allow; but in face of her own admission, and the evidence against her, will avail her but little; she will be convicted."

"Oh, don't say so."

"Unless, indeed, you can give us any clue to the real thief."

Poor George seemed dreadfully agitated. He was evidently fond of the unhappy girl. He suddenly asked—

"Is there no way of getting her off; can you not aid her to escape; my father shall pay all expenses. But to convict poor Mary would for ever stain the character of our family."

"I can't see that, George," chimed in his father.

"Nor I," said Vokes; "but let us change the subject. I hear you lost at the late races?"

The young man, seemingly thinking of something else, merely uttered, "Did I?"

The father appeared astounded, for he had ever considered George to be far too rigid in his moral principles thus to have gambled on the turf.

"You did," went on Vokes; "Betsy, at Goggins, gave the pound note you left for Captain D——."

The detected sportsman was now all attention; his agitation was really frightful.

"Ah, you seem surprised at my knowledge. I'll tell you more. You bought some cigars at the same time, and paid for them with this half-crown, a half-crown strongly marked," added Vokes, as he partly produced it, but carefully shrouded it with his hand.

"What's that you say?" said L. D——.

"Nothing, nothing at all. But see, your son is not very well. He has probably over-excited himself. I'll take him into my dressing-room—administer some restorative essence, and he'll soon be well. Nay, you must not come, you will only do harm; see, he waves you off. Come, George, you'll be better presently; come along," and he led the poor sufferer off.

I need scarcely tell you that during the absence of his son and his friend L. D—— spoke but little.

He adored his son, and thus to see him strangely attacked completely paralysed the old man.

Five minutes elapsed—ten minutes elapsed—and the anxious parent would fain have sought his child; but I gently detained him.

In about twenty minutes Vokes again appeared, followed by George; who, though still pale, seemed to have recovered his strength, and in reply to his near relative's inquiries, assured him that "it was nothing. It had now quite passed away."

For about five minutes a gloom—a painful silence—hung over us all. This was abruptly broken by Vokes.

"George and I have discovered the pilferer, Mr. D——, and I will be guarantee that you are never so robbed again."

"Was it Mary Toovey?"

"Decidedly not!"

"Who was it, then?"

"That you will never know. It is sufficient to say he has been punished and you are safe for the future."

"But why, then, did the girl admit it?"

"She best knows."

"I shall closely cross-question her when I go home."

"Then, indeed, you will not, for she is now several miles on her way to Dublin, where, well knowing her innocence, I have sent her to live with a servant of mine. You will see her no more!"

"This is very mysterious!"

"And so let it remain; make any fuss about it, and the punishment of your garrulity will fall heavily on you. Let me beseech you never again to allude to it; make what excuse you like for Mary's absence, but never hint at your first unjust suspicions."

"Unjust?"

"By heaven they were! Harry, pass the hot water; we'll never allude to this subject again."

If L. D. did not *read* the case aright, he was indeed a happy man.

L. D. has been gathered to his fathers. His son George, who has settled in Dublin, married twelve months after his death a certain Mary Toovey—a girl who, I believe, would willingly have given her life for him.

THE CHARMED BULLETS.

As I came up in the steamboat from Kilkee with my daring friend Vokes, I could not help blaming him, in no measured terms, for the reckless manner in which he was in the habit of running into every danger, and took this opportunity of remonstrating with him, as I had only just heard that two days before he had rode unarmed, and unsupported, save by a single orderly, into the middle of a faction fight, and seized a notorious character, although he full well knew that there were hundreds of persons engaged in that struggle who had privately and solemnly sworn to take his life whenever an opportunity offered.

And where indeed could such an occasion so appositely present itself as in the midst of a violent tumult, where no one could in particular be identified as committing a murder, since all around was noise, riot, and bloodshed?

How foolhardy, then, must be the man who thus, as it were, purposely and knowingly braved a fearful doom.

"*Giggi mi gow!*"—(a favourite term of derision used by my friend)—"Giggi mi gow! Sure aint I here safe and unhurt, and why are you thus mourning and croning over me as if I was a corpse at your feet? Faith, your dull look and your lachrymose tone are both too melancholy even for a well-conducted wake."

"But if you care so little about your own life, recollect you have a wife and children."

"Bother, Master Hal. Don't I tell you they won't hurt me."

"But why. What prevents them?"

"Well, then, I don't know. But perhaps it may be, because they think I have a charmed life."

"A charmed life? What do you mean?"

"Oh, it's very simple; I'll tell you. You must know that soon after I was appointed a magistrate I went without any fixed intent to a great cattle fair near Adare; here I found some thousands of farmers and others assembled, and here I heard all the usual coping and squabbling, the sure concomitants of such a festival. Several people had been taken up for picking pockets, and some for horse-stealing; one man had houghed two cows out of spite, while another had ridden off clear with a horse he had been allowed to mount, and had not yet been overtaken. The usual number of broken heads had been patched up and bathed in whiskey, while one or two who had had their arms and legs broken had been carried off to hospital—in a word, it was a regular Irish fair, and I felt, as a magistrate, that before long my duties would become onerous. I must tell you, however, that a short time before this I had been shot at, whilst sitting at table, and though the ball had passed between my body and my arm I was not touched, and that on another occasion I had an equally narrow escape. So the superstitious peasantry began to talk about my having 'a charmed life,' and all that sort of nonsense."

"I might, however, have been about two hours in the fair when a young respectably dressed farmer came up to me and challenged me to sell the mare I was riding. Now it so happened that it was the very thing I wished to do. So, after some apparent objections, I, with seeming reluctance, assented. The farmer required a short trial. This was but fair; so I got down, and he was soon in my saddle. 'Walk, trot, or gallop him,' said I, 'but do so along the road, and do not go beyond the stone which stands about 150 yards off.' 'Agreed!' replied the proposed purchaser, and away he went. He first proceeded gently, then broke into a trot. At this moment a policeman whispered in my ear—'Sure your worship, that's Jerry, the most clever horse robber in Ireland.' I was startled, and at once saw through the trick, so I roared to the rascal to come back, but such was clearly not his intention, for without turning his head he set off at full speed. I called louder and louder, and the crowd, who always favour a clever thief, cheered him for his activity. I seized a long

horse-pistol from the policeman's holster, and roared out that I'd shoot him if he did not stop. 'You'll shoot your horse, Major,' cried a bystander, grinning. 'He's too far off by half,' added another. 'Could you shoot the moon?' screamed a would-be wit, and they all began laughing.

"'Boys,' said I, 'I'll bring that fellow down. It's true he's far beyond the usual shot, but I'll hit him. I won't kill him, but I'll hit him in the heel,' and instantly levelling the pistol I fired. In another moment, to the astonishment—I may fairly say the dismay—of the crowd, the fellow was heard to scream out, and, with a fearful bound from the saddle, he fell wounded on the road, while my horse galloped on without a rider.

"To depict the surprise of the people assembled would be impossible. The shot was at a range of 300 or 400 yards, made with an old police pistol and carelessly aimed. They could scarcely believe the evidence of their eyes. But when some of those who had run off to the spot, screamed out that 'Jerry was shot in the heel' and when, on his being brought back, it was discovered that the ball had actually divided the tendon Achilles, their astonishment vented itself in loud exclamations—all declaring that it was a *charmed shot*—'that I was in league with certain nameless powers'—'that, faith, that same Major was something more than a man.' In fear they shrank from me, and during the whole day not a soul would approach me; and thus it was my claims to the possession of supernatural protection first arose. Poor Jerry had three month's imprisonment, but he never murmured. He only blamed his luck in having these bad dealings with the devil. Another act, somewhat similar, soon after confirmed my demoniac character, and after all it has so aided me, although I have loudly disclaimed it and much dislike it, that I laugh at any threat they make."

Arriving early at the cottage, and having nothing else to do, we together took a stroll in the country—followed in the distance by couple of policemen, a most necessary precaution, which had I been consulted I should certainly have doubled.

After an hour's walk I felt thirsty, so we turned into the house of a small farmer, who professed to be a great friend of Vokes. Here I asked for a cup of milk, or buttermilk. But the worthy tiller of the land was far too hospitable to hear of this; he insisted on my taking a piece of bread and cheese (for he was what is called a *comfortable* farmer) and a glass of cold whisky-and-water. After some objection I consented, and he went to the cupboard to take them out. Scarcely had he opened it, when Vokes suddenly called in the policemen, and desired them to seize the man. "Halpin, put handcuffs on that fellow, and take him across to Rathbane, while you, Reedy, search the closet, and bring all the contents with the prisoner."

I stared with undisguised astonishment. The poor agriculturist turned pale, but held out his hands to be manacled without uttering a word.

Sergeant Reedy now announced the contents of the cupboard—a piece of cheese and a loaf, half a bottle of whisky, a pack of cards, a prayer-book, and three pistol balls. Nothing more.

"That will do," replied Vokes. "Bring him along, and don't let him touch any of the things." I was dumbfounded. Why a civil and obliging peasant, on whom we had called by the merest accident, should be thus cruelly and savagely treated I could not for the life of me understand. I had often seen the Major do strange things, but this beat all. Thus to disgrace a kind and hospitable fellow, without any apparent cause, seemed the very height of tyranny, and I felt inclined, as I had been partly the cause of the man's seizure by visiting his cottage, to remonstrate with Vokes. But then, again, I knew that he was a just man, and that he never acted harshly unnecessarily.

And I also well knew he disliked cross-questioning, so I determined not to say

a word till we were once more alone. In the meantime, I vainly puzzled my brain to pick out—either from the conduct of the man, his appearance, or the articles found in his safe—what possible circumstance could thus have placed him in arrest.

We soon arrived, and Vokes instantly proceeded to interrogate the prisoner; but not until he had summoned his secretary to be present—a somewhat unusual formality.

But this he so far explained, as to state that as the affair was one in which he himself was personally interested, he wished everything to be conducted as publicly as possible.

So while the magistrate, his secretary, and myself sat at the table, the prisoner stood, apparently in some agitation, at a short distance, surrounded by policemen.

Vokes at once began.

"Your name is Hayes—Tim Hayes, I believe?"

"It is, your worship."

"You are a tenant on the lands of Kilballycrow?"

"I am."

"And now, my good friend, you need only answer such questions as you think proper, for I tell you fairly, if you say anything to criminate yourself it will be noted down. Do you understand?"

"I do, your honour. Sure my foster-brother's an attorney."

"How long have you lived in your present farm?"

"Five years."

"I believe you have no arms?"

"None, Major. I'll swear I have not a weapon of any kind."

"I know that," replied the functionary, quickly; "but your cousin Carmody has a fine long pistol?"

The prisoner turned pale, and rather stammered out, "I b'lieve he has—that is, I don't know."

"Yes, you do, Tim—yes, you do; for you've cast bullets for it."

"The saints be good to us. Is it that, you mane?" cried the now trembling captive. "I never cast any."

"Didn't you cast the three we found in the cupboard?"

"Not I, then. Sure I don't know how it was done; them was brought me by my cousin, and left there by accident."

"Search the prisoner!" ordered Vokes. His pockets were rifled, and a bullet-mould produced. The man actually groaned with terror.

"What do you say now?"

"Faith, I forgot it. Carmody must have put it there."

"Of what are those bullets made?"

"I don't know," groaned the poor wretch.

"Yes, you do. Reedy, split one of those balls and give it to me." This was done. "Exactly as I thought. They are of silver—silver, Master Hayes—pure silver, and consequently meant for me. I have long known that Carmody has sworn to shoot me; and I also know that he declared he'd get silver bullets to shoot me, as I possess a charmed life, and nothing else could destroy it. All this I knew; but I was not aware as I am now that you were selected to cast them."

The unhappy prisoner threw himself on his knees, and earnestly offered to confess all.

"Sure he knew from the beginning that it would have a bad end; he felt everything was known to the magistrate; he'd betray his companions; he'd do anything; but he hoped he would not be punished, as he only did it because the bad lot fell on him at a game of cards."

"Take him down to my office in William-street, and I'll see about it; all will depend upon how much you have to reveal, and how far your truth may be relied on."

"And as to that——"

"Away with him," and the man still calling out for mercy, was hurried off.

"Didn't I tell you, Harry, I bore a charmed life? What do you say now? Believe me, the superstitious fear of his enemy is a better buckler for a soldier to rely upon, than the best arm he himself carries. Come, my boy, the ladies are waiting for us, and we must really be punctual, or, after all, I may perhaps lose 'my charm!'"

RECEIVING RENTS.

VOKES and myself were dining at the hotel in Tipperary, when we were joined by Mr. H——, one of the most intelligent members of the legal profession in Ireland, who, besides his other duties, performed those of several first-rate agencies in Kildare, Queen's County, and Tipperary.

The addition of this pleasant companion to our company gave great satisfaction to my relative; and, indeed, I shared the feeling, when, warmed by a glass or two of punch, our friend poured forth a string of most amusing anecdotes.

After an hour thus agreeably employed, the magistrate turned round, and abruptly asked him—

"And what brings you here?"

"I am come to collect the rents on the Kilbarry estate, for which I am the agent."

"Are you going to try the experiment when the country is in such a disturbed state? Sure, your life is not worth a days purchase if you do."

"Oh, this is the third time I've done so, and here I am, safe and sound. On the first occasion, it is true, I ran a considerable risk; but now I've no fear."

"How is that?"

"Oh, it's a long story though a curious one, strangely illustrative of the Tipperary peasantry; but——"

"Oh, let's have it!"

"Pray do," I chimed in.

"Well, I'll tell it you, for I think I can recollect all the circumstances."

"I was barely three-and-twenty years of age, and wholly unacquainted with this county, when I was nominated agent to the Kilbarry estate, a small but snug property, worth about 1000*l.* or 1200*l.* a year. When the first rent became due, I came down to Clonmel, accompanied by an assistant, and at once demanded the sums in arrear. I was coolly but determinedly met by a general refusal from every one of the tenants."

"It appears the lands had been lately sold; the farmers assured me that they looked upon the sale as illegal, and one and all declared their consequent determination not to pay one farthing. They also added this comforting assurance, namely, that though they did not wish to be uncivil, the sooner I returned to Dublin the sooner I should be in safety. My assistant, on this hint, at once fled, and on my appealing to a friend in the locality, he strongly advised me to do the same."

"Nothing could be done on the spot, that was clear. The man I had taken with me would alarm others; indeed, I could better serve my cause in Dublin than in Tipperary; by these and other arguments, I was persuaded to return to the Irish metropolis. Thence, a short correspondence ensued with the default-

ers, but not one wavered. They again positively refused to pay, and dared me to enforce my claim. In the meantime, I found myself (what is called) *fixed* for the whole amount, and as I could ill afford the loss, I determined, whether it cost me my life or not, to make one more personal effort.

"Having thus made up my mind, I sought out Charles Macklin, a barrister, and a schoolfellow of mine. I knew he would do anything to serve me. After stating my case to him he for a few moments remained in silent doubt, and seemed mentally to canvass some idea. At length he turned round and abruptly exclaimed, 'Yes, you shall have it; it is the only way.'

"I looked puzzled.

"Yes, I'll give you a letter to the only man in the whole county who can assist you. But if I give you this introduction, you had better be entirely guided by his advice."

"I will," said I; "but is your friend a magistrate?"

"By no means," said Macklin, smiling. "I am about to present you to Bill Quiglan."

"What?" cried I, starting up with astonishment, "Bill Quiglan, the supposed murderer, the most desperate man in the county?"

"The same," replied he, coolly sitting down and writing a short note, which he carefully sealed. "The same; if he cannot assist you, none can. Keep, however, your own counsel, and see him, if possible, before it is known that you are in the county. Good luck to you—good bye." He handed me the letter, and I took my leave.

"I went down by the then night mail, and, keeping close, made myself acquainted with the locality where my redoubted friend resided. I ordered a covered car and as the evening shades closed in, I started.

"In the middle of a wild bog stood the cottage I sought—a more exposed, a more desolate spot I never beheld. But I boldly knocked at the door, and, lifting the latch, I entered. The whole dwelling consisted of one room. Over the fireplace a well-kept long duck-gun was suspended, and a brace of pistols served as a further ornament between the bed and the chimney corner; a pitchfork was thrown carelessly against the wall, and everything denoted warlike defence in case of attack. At the same time, although the habitation consisted of a single chamber, there was an air of neatness and comfort about it, far beyond the average of luxury displayed by Irish cabins in general.

"Bill, who was a tall powerful man, decently dressed, and possessed of a fine countenance, rose on my entrance, put down his *dudeen*, and perceiving me to be a gentleman, bowed to me respectfully. He showed little or no symptoms of surprise—though evidently ill-pleased with the visit.

"Good evening, Mr. Quiglan."

"Sure I'm generally called Bill Quiglan—at your service. Can I be of any use to you, sir?"

"This will explain," said I, handing him my letter of introduction. "It is from Mr. Charles Macklin, now in Dublin."

"Then, sir," said he, hastily banishing the frown from his brow, "then, sir, you are welcome a thousand times. I trust his honour is well?"

"Quite well—quite well. But you had better read his communication."

"I'll do that same." He opened the letter and perused it with great attention, then suddenly turning round, he exclaimed: "And now, sir, what can I do for you?"

"I am come for the purpose of enforcing the payment of the rents on the Kilbarry estate. Mr. Macklin thought you could assist me?"

"And so I can."

"Well, what had I best do?"

“Arrest Tim Macarthy, the chief tenant!”
 “Macarthy? He has several labourers; he is well lodged, and I fear I can find no bailiff to undertake the job. Why he is the most lawless of the lot.”

“That’s true for you: not a soul would dare to try it. That’s the man—he should be seized.”

“Then what am I to do?”

“Charles Macklin is your friend: it is sufficient—I’ll seize him myself.”

“What assistance will you require?”

“None: they’d be bold men, and bad ones too, who’d offer resistance to Bill Quiglan, of Ballybeg. Sure you have heard of me before—have you not—or else why do you thus come to me?”

“Well, Bill, it is true I have heard,” and here I began to speak in a somewhat nervous manner, ‘I have heard that some years ago you had the misfortune to—that is—’

“Out with it—don’t stammer or mince the matter. You’ve heard I murdered Tim Dooler—sure it’s no secret—all the country rang with it—and I must admit that the jury brought in a fair verdict when they pronounced me guilty. It’s well for them I considered it so, or some of them would not be riding about their farms at this moment. I had no right, you see, to punish them for a just verdict.”

“But if you were convicted how did you get off?”

“Ah, then, you might have guessed it from the way in which I treat Counsellor Macklin’s note. Didn’t he find a flaw in the indictment, or some such thing, and by his exertions didn’t he get me off clear and clean—so there was an end of that affair?”

“My looks plainly expressed my horror and astonishment. This he at once perceived.”

“You now know why I’d lay down my life for Charley Macklin—may Providence bless him! Faith, I’ll be true to him as steel. And as you are his friend, I’ll go through fire and water to serve him; so you needn’t fear me. Though, faith, I believe you are about the only man in the county that does not. Sure, I’ll seize him, and lodge him in Cashel gaol.”

“I’m much obliged to you; but even that won’t do. He must appear in Dublin, and I fear it will be impossible to convey him there.”

“That’s true for you; they’d never allow it. Bedad! the boys are true to the cause. It’s not a stranger they’d allow to carry off one of themselves. Your only way will be to apply for a large detachment of soldiers and police, and march him off. Faith, they’ll have a rough walk of it; and it’s not so sure they’ll get him to Dublin after all.”

“Right, Quiglan; but cannot you suggest any other mode?”

“Hould your tongue for a minute, and let me think.”

“He pondered while taking three or four whiffs of his pipe, then suddenly turning round, he asked—

“Do you know the contents of the note you brought me?”

“Not I.”

“Then I’ll tell it to you. He merely says ‘H—, the bearer of this letter, is my best friend; treat him as you would treat myself, and serve him if you can.’”

“Upon my honour, I’m much obliged to him.”

“And you know,” continued ‘Big Bill,’ ‘that the counsellor saved my life and therefore you must be aware, I’d risk that life ten hundred, ay, indeed, ten thousand times over to please him. Faith, then, I’ll not shrink from it, though the task is difficult. I’ll seize him, and convey him to Dublin to-morrow night.’

“A thousand thanks.”

“That will do. You will of course, pay all expenses, and give me 10*l.* for my trouble?”

“‘Willingly.’”

“‘Well then, give me the writ.’”

“‘I produced several.’”

“‘This one will do,’ said Bill, selecting the writ against Macarthy; ‘and now be off, and if any one stops you, tell him you are a friend of Bill Quiglan. Don’t be late in Cashel; I’ll be there before five. Good night;’ and he closed his door as I drove off to Tipperary, wondering whether my new friend could really carry out his promises.

“‘I arrived on the next evening, about five o’clock, at the inn in Cashel, and learnt that a person had called and ordered a car for himself and a friend to proceed to Clonmel at seven o’clock.

“‘Do you know who the person was?’”

“‘After a moment’s hesitation, he replied, ‘It was Bill Quiglan, sir; he has brought a prisoner, whom he wishes to convey to Clonmel, where the assizes are going forward.’”

“‘I felt surprised, and almost feared treachery on hearing that he had thus publicly proclaimed our intended departure; but as it was now too late to retrace my steps, I made the best of it, and sat down to a hurried dinner. This was scarcely over when my bold companion was announced. He was dressed most respectably, and assumed an air of gentility and confidence which I had not perceived on the previous evening.

“‘Well, sir, when you are done, we will, if you please, at once start. I wish to get into Clonmel as early as possible,’ and he gave me a knowing wink unperceived by the waiter.

“‘I was going to say, ‘Quiglan——.’”

“‘Nabocklish. Run, Pat, and hurry the car. Sure we’re to go round by the gaol to take Macarthy up.’”

“‘Well,’ thought I, ‘this man is the most imprudent fellow I ever met with,’ and I loudly expressed the idea as the waiter closed the door.

“‘Whist! these walls have ears.’”

“‘Yes; but you don’t understand. It’s not——.’”

“‘Hisht! faith, do you take me for an omadawn. All’s right; you’ll see presently;’ and without allowing me again to speak, he descended with me, and jumped on the car. Within a quarter of an hour we were clear of the town, with Macarthy seated beside me well secured.

“‘In silent astonishment we drove along the road, with which I was thoroughly acquainted, and could not help fancying that I was betrayed; indeed, I had begun mentally to reproach my folly in having thus trusted myself in the power of such a villain, when suddenly Bill turned round and peremptorily ordered the car-driver to turn up a bye road.

“‘Sure that’s not the way to Clonmel?’”

“‘I know that; but turn up——.’”

“‘Faith, thin, I’ll do no such thing. I was hired to go to Clonmel, and to Clonmel I’ll go.’”

“‘You know me, Thady Ryan; you well know that I value a man’s life just as much as I do a dog’s. Do you see this—and here he produced a large horse-pistol, which he presented at the man’s head. By the heavens above me——.’”

“‘Ah, then, Bill, sure you wouldn’t murder me? You know I’m sworn to go to Clonmel.’”

“‘Do so, then. Jump down; I’ll drive. You may now walk on and tell the boys; but, as I said before, may the curse of Cromwell light on me but I’ll blow your brains out if you mount a horse, or hasten beyond a walk, to inform your friends that we’ve changed our destination.’”

“‘The man sprang down, and scanned Bill from head to foot with a savage glance, evidently weighing the chances of an encounter. But Quiglan’s looks.

were now most strangely altered ; he no longer wore a bland smile. His brow was contracted, his teeth fixed firmly, and as he followed the movements of the other ruffian, continuing to keep the muzzle of the pistol pointed at him. I never beheld so fierce an object in the course of my life. The hesitation lasted less than a minute ; in that period the driver had slunk off, conscious of his danger. Bill had seized the reins, and was making the horse gallop in an opposite direction to that in which we had originally started.

"We hastened on, in this way, for several miles ; no person was visible. The cross road we were following was evidently unfrequented. At length I perceived a horseman in the distance, and mentioned the circumstance to Bill, who instantly handing me his pistol, desired me to point it at the head of the prisoner, and instantly to blow out his brains if he endeavoured to escape. I complied with the first part of his request ; I much doubt, even in case of need, whether I should have followed the second portion of his directions.

"Presently the rider came up with us, his horse evidently much distressed by the pace he had been compelled to keep up. The man held a bundle in his hands, and as he approached us, roared out to us to stop.

"Not a bit of it," growled Bill.

"Sure haven't I brought some clothes for Mr. Macarthy, and I only want you to stop while I deliver them."

"Not a taste of it, Tim Grady ; and what's more, if you look at my friend on the car, you'll see he has the very pistol in his hand which sent your friend and namesake Tim Doolan into another world, and I've its own foster brother inside my waistcoat ; and what's more, if you attempt to spake to the prisoner, I'll make short work of it. You know Bill Quiglan well, and you know he never lies ; so be off wid you, or, by my soul, I may be tempted to try the little argument I have ready cocked in my breast. Be off wid ye ; do ye hear?"

"The man looked at him, then muttering something in Irish, turned back.

"By dad, Tim, it's little I care for your threats. I'll come back, and you won't even dare to repeat the words you now utter, much more attack me. And now, sir, we must drive for our lives."

"Couldn't you stop and ease my wrists a little ; they hurt me very much," chimed in the prisoner.

"Then by the vestments I won't, so you need try no tricks on me. Sure, don't you well know there are ten or twelve of the boys coming after us, and Tim only outstripped them by virtue of his horse's speed. Faith, I fancy I can almost hear them now." We went on at full speed, and a mile further on, turned into an open and broad road.

"We're better off now," said Bill ; "but we're not safe yet." Presently the noise of wheels was heard, and our bold driver shouted, "It's all right now," and stopped the car and having taken back the pistol from me, began to help the prisoner down. At this moment the Kilkenny mail, *en route* for Dublin, came up, to intercept which, had evidently been Bill's object.

"Stop ! stop !" cried he, and having spoken to the guard, Macarthy and myself were soon comfortably placed inside while Bill followed in the car about two miles further on the road, when, the coach delaying for a few minutes at a rustic tavern, he commended his vehicle to the care of the innkeeper, promising to return for it in a few days, and jumped into the mail with us, which fortunately had only our three selves inside it.

"Bill was rather an amusing companion, and chatted away in high spirits, and even Macarthy, seeing there was no use in being sulky, joined in our conversation, and more than once shared a glass, in perfect good humour with his captor. This in England would appear strange, but such conduct in Ireland is by no means uncommon.

Early in the morning we arrived in Dublin, and my friend was duly lodged

in prison. After a few days, seeing there was no hope, he offered the amount of his overdue rent. But by Bill's advice, I refused it, and insisted on his appearing in Court unless all the others paid likewise. After a short hesitation he assented to this, and handed me the full amount of every claim, and succeeded in getting his discharge. I joyfully handed Bill double the sum I had promised him, and from that moment to this, though I have frequently visited the estate, and collected the rents of Kilbarry, I have never been annoyed by incivility or default. While as to Bill, I rather think his reckless boldness on this occasion has made him more popular in the county than ever. Of course I've changed some of the names; but to the truth of the circumstances I have narrated, I pledge myself.

"By George, you are a plucky fellow," exclaimed Vokes, delighted with the anecdote. "I only wish you were a magistrate in our county."

"What, to be shot at every night?"

"Ah, now you are exaggerating. It's not so bad as that."

"Do you mean to say you were never fired at?"

"Oh, as to that, it does sometimes happen: I was shot at last night within a mile of my own house. By the bye, that reminds me I must buy a new hat," and he displayed his old one with a bullet-hole through it. I stared with astonishment, for my friend had actually supped with me immediately after the event, and never alluded to it.

"As I had had no startling hint respecting the danger I had myself personally run, I proposed to take a stroll, and then to return to Limerick. We did so. Mr. H—— slept at Tipperary, and the next day visited Bill, and Tim, and Macarthy, and the rest of his now friendly tenants.

"Certainly Ireland is a strange country."

THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.

Vokes was seated in his office in Limerick, surrounded by policeman and clamorous applicants for justice, giving his orders and receiving reports, when a most respectable female drove up on an outside car, and requested to speak privately to the "Major." In a few minutes the lady was shown in. After a short hesitation, in some trepidation, she thus began—

"My name is——"

"I know it—Mary Malone, of the small farm near Patrick's well."

"The same. I was not aware that you knew me? but oh, Major, I've brought you in bad news that you don't know. Sure my husband, Thaddy Malone—he's gone off and deserted me. He went last night."

"Not so; he went on Monday last. Never tell me a lie."

"Ah, thin, Major," cried the wretched woman—"ah, thin, it's myself that am so upset that I scarcely recollect the day."

"That's odd; for you wrote a note on Tuesday to William Johnson, the wheelwright announcing the fact, and sent it by Paddy Rhu."

"The Lord be good to us!" almost screamed the unhappy female. "You know everything. Sure it's true."

"And in that note you said you did not expect him back. Why did you think so?"

To make use of a common English term, poor Mary was struck all of a heap, and she vainly tried to look calm; but being a strong-minded woman, and somewhat annoyed at the system of espionage exercised on her movements, she now recovered her spirit, and with boldness met the inquiring glance of the magistrate.

"Well, now, I'll tell you—of course it's between ourselves—it cuts me up to

confess it, but as you insist on it, I'll tell the truth. I suspect he has gone off with a hussey of a soldier's wife, whose husband is quartered in the Castle Barracks."

"Indeed! What is her name? We'll have her arrested."

"Oh, thin, it's not myself that exactly knows it—though I think he called her 'Ann.' As to following her, sir, that's out of the question, for they went off in a ship the very next day to America."

"My good friend, you mistake. Not a vessel has sailed from this port to the United States for ten days."

"Oh, thin, I can't be sure—and, oh, I hope I may be! For with all his faults, I loved Thady dearly. If he don't come back, heaven only knows who's to console me or take charge of the farm."

"Wouldn't William Johnston do as much for you?"

Mary Malone turned scarlet, but ere she had time to reply, Vokes again spoke.

"Was not your husband a great drunkard?"

"He was, your honour."

"He sometimes got insensibly drunk?"

"He did that same; but I loved him for all that."

"Did you ever quarrel?"

"Oh, thin, why would we quarrel?"

"Well, I only asked you because I had hoped he might have left you in a fit of passion."

"Ah, thin, perhaps it was so. We did sometimes have bits of difference."

"He accused you of preferring some one else?"

"Faith he did; but a bigger lump of a lie, by——" Then suddenly lowering her tone, "It was all a mistake, for I loved Thady dearly."

"I thought he sometimes beat you?"

"Well, he might; perhaps I deserved it. But I'll forgive him all if he only come back to me."

"You asked to see me; you now say you do not wish me to pursue him. What, then, do you want?"

"Oh, thin, Major, I wanted you to come out and just look in on me, and show the neighbours by kindness that I bear a good character. For, sure, there are some of them husseys who go the lengths to say that I'm glad that Thady's dead."

"Dead?"

"No, I mean gone away. By dad, I'd pitch them and the Johnstons and all the world over Throw Hill to see my Thady return. Ah, now thin, Major, will ye come?"

"I will. Remain you at home to-morrow, and I'll be with you in the course of the day, Mrs. Malone. We'll settle their gossip."

"Oh, thin, may heaven be gracious to ye; ye are always kind. Sure, I brought in a small keg of butter of my own churning."

"I never take presents of any kind. So, now, away; I'll be with you to-morrow;" and away went the grass widow, apparently much pleased with the result of her visit.

No sooner was the distressed lady gone, than Michy, one of Vokes best aids—if a rascally informer who had hung his own brother on his fraternal evidence, and betrayed a gang of some twenty ruffians, could be so designated—was called in to counsel.

My little friend, who was Protean in the forms he assumed, was dressed as a simple country boy; he had already been some time with Vokes before I entered and had evidently given him important information.

Now there are stern moralists who may condemn this mode of obtaining

evidence—this horrible way of arriving at facts through the means of a wretch often unworthy of belief.

Perhaps so to assist the efforts of any other man than my relative would have been dangerous, but the deep search he ever carried out to arrive at the real truth, the acuteness of his cross-examination, the stern certainty that if deceived he would at once withdraw his protection from the deluding party, which in effect would be little less than delivering him up to be punished by the friends of those whom he had betrayed, kept these otherwise dangerous emissaries in the most wholesome check.

While detained by Vokes for purposes of justice they were protected, clothed, and fed, and if after a time they could be spared, they were sent off to America with a good round sum in their pockets.

If they misbehaved, or indulged in falsehood, lynch-law would soon be executed on them. No wonder, then, that their evidence, under wholesome examination, might prove useful.

Of all those who had given evidence for the Crown, Mickey was the only one detained as a necessary spy, or, as we should more politely call it in the present day, a detective,

He was far too well trained and taught to attempt any deception. Whatever he said might be relied upon.

"And so, Mickey, you can recollect the words that were posted up on the smithy beyond Rathbeale, last Saturday night?"

"I can," replied the other, looking at me most suspiciously.

"It's only my relative—go on."

"Well, sir, I gave a shilling to Paddy Rooney to drive his car for him, and by the same token he was so drunk he couldn't drive it himself; so I bought two noggins of whiskey, and I guv him one, yere honour; and then I laid him down, and having put on his top coat—for it was raining awfully—and having put on his Jersey hat, I lays him in the car, and made a pillow of sods of turf for his head—for, faix! he seemed uncommon inclined to choke—and away I druv. On the way, who should I overtake but Bill Brophy, of Ballymondus."

"'God save ye!' says he. 'Sure you'll give me a lift, Paddy Rooney, like an honest boy?'"

"'I will,' says I, stopping the car."

"'Faith!' says he, 'you ain't Paddy Rooney.' And he was a going to turn away."

"'Stay, Bill,' says I. 'Ain't I all the same? Sure there's Pat Rooney drunk in the car, and ain't I driving him home? So jump up.' And with that up he jumps."

"'Bill Brophy,' says I, 'what makes you away so far from your county—and where are you going?'"

"'Faith, then,' says he, 'the climate's become rather warm down there, ever since somebody houghed the Englishman's cattle. So I came down here, and I'm going to meet some of the lads at the smithy beyant, if your blood pony—bad luck to him—will only draw us there.'"

"'Oh, then, there's no fear of that.'"

I now interrupted Vokes, and as I had come purposely to fetch him, urged him to hasten his prolix informant.

"It wouldn't do," whispered he, "if I didn't let him tell his tale his own way. I'd never get at the truth;" and then, turning to the informer, he merely said, "Go on."

"Well, your honour, I soon pumped out of Bill—whose lips are like sieves, through which everything runs—that a party were about to meet to form some plans; but what they were he was not quite sure."

"'Nabocklish!' says he, 'you are a true boy, I believe, since you know me

and my father, though I don't recollect you; and if there's a loose share in the fun, you shall have it.'

"'Thank ye,' says I.

"Well, we came to the smithy, and there there was a large party, with lots of potheen. But as I see'd Ryan among them who might recognise me, I wouldn't go in, but sat outside.

"Presently I heard them singing and talking, and the smoke of tobacco came out like the smelling of a rose; but then when I sniffed this, and the scent of the raal potheen, it was as much as I could do to resist. But I had promised to wait for Brophy, so I thought it safest to remain quiet. In the song they sung they mentioned all the affairs they had been in; and John Leary boasted 'twas he as settled Fitzroy. But they all bragged of so many deeds of the kind, I didn't believe them."

"But the song—was it funny?"

"Very; it was all about murdering the gentry, and getting the land to themselves; and they always wound up with some chorus, saying how they'd serve your honor."

"Do you recollect? You said just now you did."

"I do."

"Repeat it, then."

"Well, Major, I'm not a good singer; but the end of each verse ran thus:—

There's Hoskins is going, and Going is gone,
George Lake and Tom Vokes are the next to come on.

What do you think of that, Major?"

"Oh, if that's all you learnt, it was scarcely worth the trip. Lines—almost the same—were posted on the inn door where I slept at Kilmellock, and even on the Chapel door, a month ago."

"Ah, but I didn't tell you how I wormed out about Mrs. Malone from Bill Brophy."

"And you are sure Johnston knows nothing of it?"

"Quite; he's a real respectable man, and don't care a trawneen for the woman."

"Well, be off; I'll see to all this."

"But Brophy, your honour?"

"I'll have him taken within an hour, as you happen to fear him; but believe me, he'll never suspect you of giving evidence. So now, go out the back way; I'm going with my friend for an evening's fishing on the falls of Doonas." And away we went.

The next day Vokes, attended by an uncouth servant in livery, drove down to Mrs. Malone's. She received him with kindness, and warmly expressed her gratitude. She placed before him a plenteous luncheon, of which the good magistrate largely partook.

His horse had been put up, and the servant now amused himself by strolling through the farm-yard, which closely adjoined the house. He seemed to saunter about carelessly; but any one who had closely watched his eyes would have seen them wander around with piercing intelligence.

Vokes, on his part, was no less busy. What these close, though unperceived investigations meant, we shall see hereafter. Nothing could exceed the civility of the functionary towards his entertainer, and he took down copious notes from her statement relative to the sudden disappearance of her husband. He shortly however, took leave of Mrs. Malone, who promised to be in Limerick on the following day to have her statement made out in writing and placed before the bench of magistrates, for the purpose of recovering, if possible, her errant partner.

Vokes and his servant, who was no less a personage than Mickey, drove back to Limerick, but few words passed between them.

"I think, Mickey, you are right. But if so, where is the corpse?"

"I can't say, but I think I know. The dunghill has been opened and closed, but not enough to let in a body; it's that puzzles me. There's something too, I think, down the half-dry well. I'm sure there's something quite white at the bottom of it. But I'll go out again if you wish it, Major?"

"No—it is enough. Did you observe, as I did, that the copper has been lit and the inside scoured since?"

"I did; but—"

"Never mind—that's enough. Did you pick up anything?"

"I did; this knife. It was hid behind the pig-stye."

"Ah, it has been recently sharpened and used. You say that Bill saw a great smoke, and that there was a bad smell came from the malt-house."

"That's the truth."

"Well, then, be ready to march with Sergeant Reedy at daybreak, and get beyond Malone's cottage without being seen, and mind the instant the woman leaves get into the premises, and search every part. I'll give directions to the Serjeant. So now jump off. Don't be seen with me going into town. I think we are on the right scent."

Some hours afterwards I went with Vokes to the theatre, where, to my great amusement, Vokes was received with three groans by the people in the gallery, while I was loudly cheered.

I looked at my friend, who laughed heartily and bowed to them, and when I timidly asked—I wonder why they cheer me. Sure it's because you are a stranger and in uniform. They'd cheer a certain old gentleman himself if he wore gold epaulettes.

A voice, however, at this instant called on "*Dirty Betty Carmody*" (a most respectable serjeant in the militia, and the leader in the orchestra) to *play up!* and having compelled him by vociferation to sound Garryowen, they began screeching, hallooing, and beating time, till the wretched old theatre nearly tumbled about our ears.

An Irish theatre some thirty years ago was, indeed, a strange arena, over which the "gods" themselves most arbitrarily presided.

A revivir.

Next day, soon after noon, the interesting Dido, so cruelly deserted, drove up to the police office, and for a few moments Vokes treated her in a most courteous manner.

Presently a message was brought in, and his whole manner changed.

"Send in Smith and Macgrath." The altered tone in which the magistrate spoke, appeared to surprise Mrs. Malone.

They entered. "Arrest that woman?"

"Me? me, Major? What do you mean?"

"I arrest you as the murderess of Thady Malone, your late husband."

"What?" screamed the astonished female; "you cannot mean it. It is impossible. I loved him dearly, and I am as innocent as you are; I swear by—"

"Don't perjure yourself. I've proofs."

"That's out of the question," cried the prisoner, brightening up, for she had been deadly pale and awfully agitated, on the first accusation being made. This, however, was no proof against her.

Any other woman would have been equally taken aback at such a dreadful—such an unlooked-for—accusation. "Sure he's gone, and far away by this time."

"You murdered him, Mary Malone."

"Where is your proof?"

"Bring in your parcel, Sergeant Reedy," who immediately opened it, and out rolled, to the horror of all around, a human head. It was bleached, and looked more like the head of a calf than of a human being.

The woman could not repress a scream.

"Is that your late husband's head?"

"I don't know—no—no. I'm sure it is not."

"Sergeant, you knew Thady Malone; is that him?"

"It is, sir; I will swear to it."

"Where did you find it?"

"In the dunghill, in his farm-yard, close to the house. I had two witnesses with me."

The wretched culprit sank in a chair; then starting up, she exclaimed, "But why say I had art or part in it? may not some one else have put it there?" and she looked round triumphantly.

"Send the next constable in;" he bore a basket.

"Sure it's an arm and a leg I found in the old well, though how it came so white I can't tell."

"Do you recollect Bill Brophy bringing your husband home on Monday afternoon very drunk, and that you plied him with liquor?"

The murderess—for by this time it was tolerably apparent to all that she was so—shuddered.

"Faith, then," said Vokes, "I'm about to commit you to gaol for the murder of your husband, and to show you that I don't wish to entrap you, although it's unusual, I'll tell you all I know. I shall probably have more before your trial, but in the meantime I tell you so much, in order that you may make a good defence if you can, and I only hope, Mrs. Malone, that as I've known you long, you may escape the dreadful doom, which, if guilty, you will not only deserve but suffer.

"I have reason to believe that, being in love with another man, although that man rejected your advances you determined on getting rid of your husband."

"Ah! then, that's not true."

"Silence and listen, or I'll say no more. On Monday evening last Bill Brophy of Ballymeadows brought Malone home to the cottage in a state of intoxication; you plied him, as I have already told you, with liquor till he was senseless; Brophy then left the house, but not the neighbourhood. He watched through a crevice in the door.

The prisoner sighed deeply,

"No sooner did you think yourself unseen, than, taking out a knife you had previously sharpened, and which I have here, you cut poor Thady's throat, taking care to catch the blood as far as possible in a flat dining dish. This done—the man destroyed—you went into the washing-linney, [*linney* is generally applied in Ireland to any shed attached to the dwelling-house,] and here you lighted the copper fire—the boiler had evidently been prepared, for it was filled with water and the fuel ready. You then returned to the kitchen, and with the hatchet, which you afterwards buried, and the knife I have got—cut up the poor fellow, and then boiled him piecemeal; look at the head and those limbs, and you will see that I am right."

A groan of horror went round; all appeared shocked except the prisoner, who maintained her calm demeanour.

"At this dreadful work you remained till long past daylight, when Brophy went away."

"Brophy's a perjured villain!" cried Mrs. Malone.

"I remarked myself the newly-cleaned copper; there are some four drops of blood near the fire-place, and I pocketed two buttons, torn from the poor man's coat, while you left the room. In the meantime an active agent looked over the premises, and remarked that the dunghill had lately been disturbed. He

also found the knife and other trifles he will produce at the trial. In a word, Mrs. Malone, you murdered your husband whose head now lies before you, and boiled his mutilated remains. Don't deny it, or you'll offend heaven; don't admit it, or it will serve to convict you at the assizes. So take her away, sergeant, and may heaven have more mercy on her than she had on my once honest tenant Thady Malone." Proved and convicted on the very clearest evidence, Mrs. Malone was hanged shortly after the following assizes.

THE DEAD CAPTURE.

Vokes had some business to Ennis; so, without making any fuss, he ordered out his favorite nag, and wholly unattended, started for that town early in the morning, desiring, for obvious reasons, that his absence should not be notified to any one who might happen to call.

"But what shall I say to them?" asked his footman as he was quitting the hall—"what shall I say?"

"Say I'm not visible."

"But why shall I say you are not visible?"

"Say? I'm engaged—ill—dead, if you like. But don't bother me." And springing into his saddle, he dashed down George street, and was far on his journey before the rest of the family were stirring.

Accustomed, however, to his frequent absence from the breakfast table, the family sat down to that meal without making any inquiry, and the business of the day went on as usual.

At about noon, a peasant, who it afterwards appeared came from the county of Clare, called, and asked to see "the master."

"It is impossible."

"Why? Sure I want to have spache of his honour?"

"Well, then, I tell you you can't."

"And why not?" persisted the other.

"He's ill."

"Oh, then, never mind that. Faith, I'm sure if he's alive he'll see me. Haven't I come all the way from Cratloe Wood—a good ten miles—and faith I'm not to be sent back without setting eyes upon him."

"I tell you you can't see him."

"Sure I'm Thaddy Watson; he knows me well."

"If you were his Holiness the Pope, you couldn't see him."

"Sure I must. Now let me only have spache of him for a bit. In holy truth, then, I *won't* go away till I have——"

"Once for all, be off, for I tell you the thing's impossible!"

"Impossible! And why?"

The servant was a bit of a wag.

He was angry and annoyed with the continuous pleading of the fellow.

Besides which, if the truth must be told, he wanted to get back to the kitchen, where his warm, comfortable dinner stood cooling, and so determined at once to come to a conclusion. He quietly replied—

"The reason is very clear—he's dead!" and slamming the door to in the astonished peasant's face he burst out laughing, and ran downstairs.

The surprised countryman stood silent on the steps of the entrance.

With the usual cunning of a low Irishman, he began to canvass in his own mind the probability of the news he had just heard being true or otherwise; and then, with a complacent grunt—uttered as if a good thought had struck him—he ran across the street, and hence took a full survey of the house.

Here he saw every blind down (the morning sun resting on the windows),

and this bore out the correctness of the footman's statement—a statement which was still more fully confirmed when he saw two policemen turned away from the door; and, last of all, Mr. Denmead, the undertaker (who happened to have been sent for by Mrs. Vokes—he being a carpenter—to make some trifling repairs) enter the house.

With a look of mystic importance and delight, the Clare-man went off and fetched his horse and car, and without waiting to transact the business he had come about, set off in haste to announce the joyful news throughout a county which had long dreaded the power of the terrible Major.

When the footman, some half an hour later, related to his fellow-servants the witty answer he had given, he was astonished to find they did not share the joke; far from it, they loudly blamed him, and foretold the serious scrape he had got himself into.

John began to feel uncomfortable; but as it was now too late to undo his folly, he wisely made the best of it, and went on cleaning his master's plate.

Vokes in the meantime carried out the measures he came over to propose, and then dined at the house of a friend.

It was dark when he started to return; but to this he did not object, as he was by no means anxious to be recognised; for the same reason he declined to be attended.

The only precaution he took was slightly to vary the route he had followed in the morning.

As he got a few miles out of Ennis, he beheld several large bonfires lighted on the hills, and he almost began to regret that he had left Limerick, as these illuminations were always used as signals for outbreak, or to telegraph some important news.

Not far from the wood of Cratloe one of these fires blazed, and although it was somewhat hazardous to do so, our bold magistrate determined on visiting the spot and learning the origin of it.

So he jumped off his horse, and concealing the pistol he carried in the holster that he now cast from him, he covered his chin with his muffler, put the hat straight on his head which he usually wore jauntily on one side, and changing his appearance and accent as far as possible, rode slowly up the ascent, whistling the "British Granadiers."

On his arrival he found an enormous fire, around which fifty or sixty people were assembled, smoking, drinking and chatting.

"Good evening to you my friends," cried the Major assuming to his own satisfaction the pronunciation and manner of an Englishman. "How do you do, my friends?"

The surprised peasantry started up, but seeing a single horseman, they again resumed their places, the neighbouring blacksmith calling out, "Faith, what are ye after? What do ye want?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing at all! I only rode here to say I had lost my way in this confounded country, and wished to ask you which way I should go?"

"And where are you going?"

"To the city of Limerick. I think you call it Garryowen in Irish."

The people burst out laughing at this specimen of a cockney, and the word *omadthawn* (idiot) might be heard issuing out of more than one mouth, as they exchanged observations in Irish.

"Thin it's yere way ye're asking?"

"Well, that's all, I believe. I really should like to find it. I'd give a shilling to any fine fellow who would tell me the way I should go?"

This new Cockneyism (as the Irish people call it) produced a fresh laugh, and seeing that the man was perfectly innocent, and a stranger, they asked the fool to partake of some of their cheer.

He did so, and seemingly allowed the liquor to open his mouth, for now on his side he began to ask questions.

"Tell me, my very excellent friends, why have you lit up this very nice fire on the top of this bleak mountain?"

"It's to convey the news."

"What news?"

"Don't you know it? Faith, thin, ye're the only man in Clare that don't. Sure, Tom Vokes the prosecutor's dead."

Vokes could not conceal a start.

"You may well be surprised, and so were we when we heard it, for he was alive and well yesterday. Here's his health."

The magistrate mentally joined in the toast.

"And a speedy passage to the bottomless pit," bellowed the farrier, with a savage bust of delight.

Vokes did *not* join in this.

"Sure, he hanged my brother for shooting an exciseman."

"And didn't he transport my cousin Pat for a simple burglary?"

"Oh, he was a savage, a raal right down savage. Bad luck to him!" chimed in a third.

"And haven't I been out these nine months on account of the burning of ould Macnaulty and his daughter. Haven't I been hunted up and down the county like a wild beast, and after all I was not the principal—I only strangled the ould fellow to prevent his telling. Ye all know it was Fred Dwyer as stabbed the girl, and robbed her, and fired the house; and there now for ye, he's down comfortable like, at his uncle's, beyant Ennistown, and aren't I here in terror of my life? Bedad, I'd like to stick a knife in his heart, the blackguard, before they bury him."

"Ah, there, Teddy Lynch, hould your tongue; you talk too much," said a female of the party.

"You're right, Biddy agrath. He'll talk himself into a hempen collar, some day, if he don't look sharp."

Vokes had now learnt all. The man of all others he wished to seize, stood within three paces of him; the fellow who had so long eluded his pursuit was now within his grasp.

Not liking the turn the conversation had taken, the C. M. P. gave notice of his approaching departure, not in a hurried manner, but in a cool, slow way, drawling out his words to the great amusement of his hearers, who looked upon the Londoner's accent as a subject of fair game, without even for an instant suspecting that their conversation, which had been carried on in pure Irish, could even have been guessed at by the Cockney before them.

Several persons now offered their directions relative to the best road for the stranger to follow, while Teddy Lynch, more eager than any other, doubtlessly desiring to earn the promised shilling, pressed forward and proffered his advice declaring he knew every yard of the country.

Vokes at once addressed him. "My good fellow, you are pleased to say you know this wild country well. Now I'm all alone and unarmed, and I never was here before, and I don't much like travelling in strange parts, you see, after dark; so what will you take to come and guide me?"

"Me—is it me?"

"Go with him," shouted two or three, "for the fun of it."

"If you'll come, I'll give you a pound-note."

"*Tare a nouns*, it's a good offer; but you'll let me off as soon as we get to Banrathy Bridge. for I have reasons for not wishing to enter any town just now."

"It's a bargain, my good friend," replied the magistrate, and away they went, the peasant walking beside the Major's horse. In this manner they proceeded, little conversation being exchanged, till they arrived at Banrathy Bridge when Lynch turning round, declared that he had fulfilled his task, and demanded the reward.

"And you shall have it," roared Vokes as he jumped off his horse—"you shall have it," cried he, seizing the surprised peasant by the collar. "Attempt to escape, and your brains shall be scattered over this bridge," added he, drawing out his pistol and presenting it at the fellow's head. "Hey, police! police! Come here quickly. Nay, it's no use struggling, Tim Lynch, for I am Tom Vokes."

The murderer looked at him, and seemed at a glance to read the truth of his assertion.

His altered manner and a few words of Irish he had mingled in his address too surely told the assassin that he was in the hands of his most dreaded enemy. He no longer struggled. He submitted to his fate.

The dead had, as he believed, come to life in order to seize him—how then could he struggle!

Terror-struck and paralysed, he allowed his captor to drag him over the bridge, at the foot of which stood a small police barrack.

Here the force, aroused by the calls of their superior, were just hurrying from their beds, when Vokes entered, dragging in his formidable prisoner. He only remained to see the fellow handcuffed and confined.

He wrote a short note to the nearest magistrate, who lived within a few yards.

Then mounting his horse, he galloped cheerfully off, to trace the origin of the report which had seemingly removed him from this world.

After some trouble he came to the real truth, and in consideration of the important capture to which it had unwittingly led, the footman was forgiven.

Tim Lynch was hanged at the next assizes held at Ennis, to the great joy and comparative security of the whole county of Clare.

THE HANGMAN.

ALTHOUGH I had given a brother subaltern two days' duty in order to shirk the disagreeable sight of a criminal being hanged, for to my great annoyance—though not to my surprise, it being an event of frequent occurrence in Ireland—I found myself detailed for the "execution party," or, to express it in less technical terms, I was ordered out in charge of some twenty-five dragoons, to be present at the execution of a culprit—a degrading service to which the cavalry are continually liable in the sister country, and as I said before, a duty to which I so strenuously objected, that my military chief allowed me to transfer it to a brother officer—he bargaining that I should take his orderlies for two days, and thus release him to the joys of the hunting field.

But though I thus eschewed the horrors of seeing a poor wretch put to death—I must admit that I had a morbid desire to behold the victim ere he suffered, and to examine the fearful apparatus which was to put an end to his existence.

I therefore asked Vokes to take me into the new gaol to see the condemned felon, to which, after a slight sneer at my inconsistency, he assented, and we walked up together.

On our arrival we were shown in the cell where the unhappy wretch sat awaiting the summons which was to call him forth to expiate the crime he had committed.

A couple of turnkeys were in attendance on the man, who sat in seeming calmness on a stool, freely conversing with the people around him.

He had confessed his crime, and had probably been absolved by his clergy, for he seemed in tolerably good spirits and fully prepared to meet his fate.

He spoke coolly about the murder he had committed, and appeared more anxious for his poor children than himself.

He had taken leave of his wife and family: he had as he had considered, made his peace with Heaven, and he now resignedly awaited the last struggle which was to wrench him from life to eternity.

He was a tall athletic young man, some five-and-twenty years of age, dressed from head to foot in white flannel, and perfectly ready to converse about himself, but equally determined not to betray the companions of his crime, nor the fearful links which probably bound him to carry out the organized will of others.

Even now, were he to afford a clue by which one of those secret societies, those brotherhoods of blood, might be discovered—even now, at the last moment, he might hope for a respite, for the judge was still near.

But no! The wretch who had steeped his hands in the life-blood of his fellow-creature, who had rendered a once happy hearth desolate, and sent forth the widow and orphan unprotected—even this wretch, I say, felt a false sense of honour—an obligation to shield his accomplices; and while he recklessly committed a crime of the deepest dye before the eye of his offended *Maker*, he still refused to break an oath which he had sworn at the bidding of his terrible copartners in guilt.

Well assured of this, I felt less sympathy for the man before me than I should otherwise have done, and hurried out of the cell—feeling that the presence of such a being was highly distasteful, and far from being that object of commiseration I had fully expected to find in him.

As we re-entered the yard, Vokes asked the head gaoler whether the prisoner's clothes had been destroyed. The official bowed assent, and we passed on. I could not resist my desire of asking the chief magistrate why this was done.

"I'll tell you," said he. "It has proved most efficacious in repressing crime."

"Burning a man's apparel a measure calculated to check crime! Pshaw! you are joking."

"Not so. Did you not see that the prisoner was dressed in white flannel—his own habiliments having been made away with, probably burnt. It was to ascertain this fact that I walked up here with you."

"Upon my honour, your ways are most strange. Pray explain yourself. I really should like to know the connexion between the destruction of a coat and breeches and the suppression of murder."

"I will gratify you. You must know, then, that when this county first earned its celebrity, every means were adopted to put down the lawless bands which then paraded through our fields in open daylight.

"Special commissions had no effect. Prompt executions were of no avail. Guilt still enjoyed her supremacy. And when an execution took place, it was rather a scene of triumph for the condemned man than the severe and wholesome lesson it was intended to impart. Cheers greeted the monster as he ascended the scaffold, and when he was cut down his body was carried away to be interred with drunken pomp.

"The latter portion of this was, however, easily put a stop to. The bodies were ordered to be buried within the precincts of the gaol: and, indeed, on some occasions, they were given over to the surgeons for dissection, to the great horror of their relatives.

"This gave a temporary check to crime: but after a while, it was clear that they became callous on this head, and even these salutary measures ceased to alarm them.

"About this time I became an officer of Government, and I mentally vowed to find out what consolation they had introduced to meet the terrible stroke aimed at them, in thus depriving them of the dead bodies of those they loved.

"After considerable trouble—for they jealously guarded their secret—I found out that immediately on each execution taking place, the friends of the culprit came to the prison-gate and claimed his clothes, which, as the governor of the gaol thought they had an undoubted right to them, were duly delivered; and loaded with these, they set off to some neighbour's cabin—generally speaking, in some distant and secluded spot—and here, having arranged the garments in a proper form, they went through the whole mockery of **WAKING THEM!**

"Here the whiskey flowed, and the tobacco-smoke formed a canopy of cloud; here they danced round the apparel of the deceased; here they poured blessings on the soul of the man who had been hanged, and called down curses, mingled with oaths of vengeance, on his murderers—thus designating all who had in anyway assisted in bringing the assassin to justice.

"Drunk, furious, and ungovernable, these creatures, consisting of men, woman, and children, screamed round the supposed corpse, and long ere they were sober, attended the clothes in mock burial to some hole which had been dug in the garden to receive them."

"Well, how could you stop them?"

"In the most simple manner. On the morning of his execution, each condemned felon, male or female, was stripped of their habiliments, and plain costumes, made of white flannel, placed on them.

"Thus clad, they appeared before the crowd, to their great horror and astonishment, which was not a little increased when, on application at the gate they

were told that the clothes of——, the person just hanged, had been burnt that morning by order of the chief justice.

“Ridiculous as this remedy may appear to you, it alarmed all the superstitious fears of the peasantry, and afforded a more effectual check to crime than any other measure I have hitherto been lucky enough to originate.”

This explanation, I must confess, surprised me much at the time it was given; but I subsequently found that it was perfectly correct, for I personally observed, when more closely investigating the character of the Irish peasantry that the sorrow for death melts away before the triumph of a “grand wake”—a long remembered glory, quoted even afterwards in the family of a poor man, with the same pride which bestows a magnificent funeral on a member of a superior class—a tribute of vain respect paid by the living to the dead in the sister country—a tribute which can do little good to the latter, while it has often proved ruinous to the unhappy survivors.

We now entered the small square room immediately beneath the drop, where a band of officials were seated, awaiting their turn of duty in the approaching melancholy ceremony.

From the corner of this apartment a winding staircase leads to the platform above, where the gallows is erected.

To this staircase I was hurrying, when I felt myself suddenly *lassoed* (if the term may be allowed). I was caught tightly round the throat by a rope which had a slip-knot, now drawn tightly close, while I beheld at the other end of it the most fearful-looking little monster that I ever met with.

There he stood grinning at me, the living picture of Hans of Iceland. Not above four feet high, blear-eyed, strongly wrinkled from age—active as a cat—there he stood tugging away at me, or rather firmly holding me—for, truth to confess, the tightening of the cord partly arose from my own plunges to escape—while the men around us joined in the horrid laughter which exposed to my view the wide mouth and the thirty-two pearl-white fangs of this fearful nondescript.

Overcome by a feeling of danger, I drew my sword, and I verily do believe that the next instant would have seen me pass it through the diminutive ruffian’s body, had not Vokes, checking his mirth, roared out, “For shame, man! put up your sword; it’s only little Micky, the hangman.”

“Gradi, gradi! (or charity) cried the facetious monster, holding out his hand in the most unmistakable manner, “Gradi, yer honour!”

Had I had gold in my pocket, instead of small silver, I think I should have bestowed it all with alacrity on the disgusting fellow, so anxious was I to get out of his clutches; as it was, I threw him a few shillings, and asked a turnkey standing near to take off my “hempen collar,” for I shrank from the touch of little Micky; and half ashamed of my unseemly violence, I clambered up the steps, which in another half hour would feel the last tread of the condemned felon.

The apparatus that I came see was of the simplest kind.

The portico on which it was reared was surrounded by a high wall, so only those could be seen who mounted the actual platform, some five feet above us; so I had time to look at the terrible engine, without being perceived by the populace, who had already collected in large numbers.

The small spot on which we now stood closely resembled a battery, and I believe this idea was not absent from the mind of him who selected it as a place of execution, since any attack on the authorities, or attempt to rescue the prisoner, the slightest suspicion of such an event occurring, and the whole party could shelter themselves behind the breastwork,—and retire down the staircase or not, as they might deem best.

Vokes told me a strange superstition—namely, the conviction in the popular

mind, that when a man and woman are executed together—which in these times was not a very rare occurrence—if they happened in swinging about to turn their backs to each other, it betokened their guilt: a token from Providence which none could dare to doubt.

As the time for the awful ceremony approached, we got away; and I confess I was glad to again find myself at home.

But here my annoyances did not end.

About two hours later I received an order to escort the hangman back to Ennis, which was anything but pleasant, as it was quite sure we should be pelted with stones the whole way; but as I had already shirked the public performance of Mr. Micky, I did not see how I could get out of the scrape.

I stated my case to Vokes, and added the sore grievance of my being forced to give up a most pleasant dinner-party in order to shield, during some eight or ten hours, a being whom I disliked and loathed.

Vokes laughed at my chagrin, but promised to relieve me from my unpleasant predicament. He put on his hat and went across to the general (Sir C. D.); in a few moments he returned, and with a smile handed me a scrap of paper—a copy of an order sent to the barracks: "Thirty men of the 32nd, in charge of a subaltern officer, will proceed to Ennis this evening, at five o'clock p. m., on escort duty. The men to be supplied with the usual rounds of ball-cartridge." I at once saw that I was free, and after thanking my relative, asked him how he managed it.

"Well, then, can't you see? Sure the horses might get injured by the stones which are sure to be thrown at them by the angry crowd; and as the cart in which Micky travels only goes *foot-pace*, he requires infantry, not cavalry, to protect him properly."

I quite agreed with the magistrate, and silently drank his health, as I sat at M——'s pleasant dinner-table.

Though trifling, the incident showed that Vokes was ever ready to meet and overcome circumstances.

The escort party was much annoyed; some of the men were hurt; all were irritated by the manner in which they were treated and abused. The officer, who had great difficulty in preventing his men from firing, assured me he would not pass such another night—one so unprofitable, so tiresome, and at the same time so degrading—to obtain a step in rank.

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